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COLLEGE ENGLISH

Vol. 4

NOVEMBER 1942

No. 2

VAN WYCK BROOKS

BERNARD SMITH¹

In his most recent work, *Opinions of Oliver Allston*, Van Wyck Brooks has given us a fine distillation of his mature views on literature and society. Since in most respects they are identical with the views he professed twenty years ago, this book may be advantageously used as a guide to the fruitful and influential quarter-century in which he has labored as a literary critic and historian. Even where his present views modify or correct his earlier ones, much light is shed on what he has stood for and what he has achieved. Few critics have ever so expertly and justly summarized themselves or so honestly drawn up a testament of the values by which they have lived, thought, and written.

Without doubt the first of these values is a profound and unshakable belief that literature is a social product with a social effect. Says Brooks:

That a great writer is a great man writing, not a mere artificer or master of words,—was not this the fact that our time had forgotten? And what, by the common report of humanity, is a great man writing? One who embodies something great, something that enriches life, something that enhances life, something that makes it higher or wider or deeper. A great man writing is one who bespeaks the collective life of the people, of his group, of his nation, of all

mankind. The greatest are those who speak for all mankind; and every great man writing knows what men and women are and what they have it in them to become,—through him humanity breathes and thinks and sings. . . . That men should have life and have it more abundantly, this is the general aim of great men writing. . . . Writers, to be sure, drew strength from writers, but they drew most of their strength from something else, a consciousness of human needs and longings.

Thus Brooks repudiates all theories of criticism which restrict critical writing to purely aesthetic considerations—i.e., problems of form and rhetoric—and all creators of literature who despise the common man or who regard his future gloomily or contemptuously. Indeed, by name and by title, with passion and eloquence, he denounces such quite dissimilar yet related critics as T. S. Eliot, Logan Pearsall Smith, F. L. Lucas, Paul Valéry, Yvor Winters, Ezra Pound, and John Crowe Ransom and such creative writers as James Joyce, Gertrude Stein, Proust, and the French symbolists, Rimbaud and Mallarmé. Thus, too, Brooks takes his stand with Tolstoy, with Gorky, with Pater, with all the religious poets, humanitarians, rebels, prophets, and teachers who have regarded literature as a means of expressing the sorrows and aspirations of humanity, as a means of guiding men toward a life that, in Gorky's words, "is beautiful and free."

¹ Author of *Forces in American Criticism*, co-editor with Malcomb Cowley of *Books That Changed Our Minds*, editor of *The Democratic Spirit*, and member of the staff of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

Now no critic worthy of the title can hold a philosophy of literature so thoroughly invested with a social sense without at the same time holding a philosophy of society that justifies it. That is to say, he who calls for a literature that reveals to men "their desire for the happiness of a life that is beautiful and free" must have some conception of the kind of life that would be. We know that Gorky had it; and Brooks has it too. It is the second of his primary values, and it has informed his writings ever since he established his critical position in 1915, with his volume *America's Coming-of-Age*. That value is his belief in socialism.

It is necessary to define carefully his socialist credo, for it is an uncommon one in the present period. It is not revolutionary communism, it is not Marxism. For Brooks is hostile to materialist philosophies and to coercion. He is an idealist, an Emersonian, and he has faith in education and evolution. Moreover, urban life and industrialism are repugnant to him; he likes the countryside and the village and expects the regeneration of our community to come from that source, which is certainly antipathetic to every socialist doctrine we know except the utopian ideas of William Morris and Tolstoy. Referring to himself in the guise of Oliver Allston, Brooks says:

He voted for Thomas Jefferson and his heirs and assigns, whom he usually found in the socialist party. . . . For industrialism, as such, he had little liking, greatly preferring the kind of society that Thomas Jefferson hoped for, although he well knew that the world would remain an industrial world for the present, under any economic system. . . . As for writers and artists, they were naturally socialists, Allston felt. Had not Carlyle, Arnold, Renan, and Dickens revolted against the coming capitalist system, the world of money-lenders and railway magnates which they saw rising about them?

In short, Brooks is a rebel against the business world—the world of pecuniary

competition in which money is the standard of value and wealth the prevailing ideal. It is a world he has described as cruel, vulgar, and base. He hopes to see in its place a world which lives by spiritual standards, in which there is neither want nor strife and in which men are free and equal. He has concluded that only under a noncompetitive (a collective or co-operative) economy can such a world exist. Then, when we have done with "a system that belittled men and cramped them, drew the metal out of them, blunted and dulled them and killed them off like soldiers in front-line trenches"—then "the inner life can develop freely." And from that condition writers "have everything to gain."

The reader must have observed that Brooks identifies his peculiar species of socialism with Thomas Jefferson—in brief, with an American hero. This desire to prove the native origin of his political credo is developed at some length, though not systematically. "The Declaration of Independence speaks of 'all men,'" he remarks. "Is there not something collective in this conception? And have we forgotten that John Quincy Adams wished to make our economy collective?" Later he says, "Collectivism exists in our tradition, even our Republican tradition,—for one does not have to mention the Democrats, not to speak of the socialists in our tradition, the Brook Farmers, Bellamy, the novelist Howells." He quotes a letter by Benjamin Franklin and a book by Edward Everett Hale containing certain collectivist sympathies.

We perceive here the third of Brooks's primary values—his cultural nativism, his belief that America has evolved ways of living, thinking, and writing which are unique and precious. Although he has written at times of European literature

and is obviously well acquainted with European thought, he has always concerned himself principally with American culture and the problems of American writers. The intellectual and aesthetic heritage of this country has invariably been the touchstone of his judgment, not only in the literary sphere but in the political as well. It is the basis of his refusal, for example, to accept Marx. He writes:

I have never been a Marxist, but I have an American socialist grain that is as tough as the Marxist. . . . I am a convinced idealist who is fully convinced that idealism will remain the American way. . . . I think Americans rightly feel that the Marxist psychology is purely European.

His cultural nationalism is evident throughout his later writings. He makes use of it in defense of his interests and prejudices; and it is often his favorite weapon of attack, particularly upon the expatriates, the more cynical and embittered moderns, and the materialists. Idealist philosophies have declined in favor and influence in our times, and so it behooves Brooks to explain his position. He does so in the following terms:

He had grown up in the years before the first world-war, when the future of mankind was an exciting vista, and his values were substantially formed before it. During the years that followed, he was aware that his point of view was not the view of his contemporaries; but he saw little reason to change it. He felt that the American world was bound to return to his point of view because it was an expression of the American psyche. . . .

The American mind, he says, is "idealistic in grain and essence." There is, indeed, no criticism of Brooks that he cannot turn into a compliment. Just as when he is accused of a "soft Emersonian idealism" he replies that he is in the American tradition, so when he is accused of romanticism he replies that he

"spoke for American literature." He asserts dogmatically, "The peculiar idealism of the romantic type was the dominant strain in American literature."

We have, then, three significant principles in Brooks's critical work—that great literature is a social expression with an idealistic aim; that men in society must live collectively if they are to live fully; and that the American tradition encompasses the two previous principles, so that a writer who departs from that tradition deprives himself of rich sources of creative energy and inherited (and therefore genuinely usable) visions of justice and truth. There are other principles, other values, in Mr. Brooks's work, but none so fundamental. It might even be argued that whatever else he believes derives from the three I have indicated, or from combinations of them. Certainly, nothing else is needed to illuminate the progress of his thought.

Brooks's concern with the American scene inspired his first book, *The Wine of the Puritans*, published in 1908—the year after he was graduated from Harvard. In it he examined, rather gingerly, some of the issues that were to engage his attention for almost thirty years. Three other small volumes followed: a study of Symonds, one of Wells, and a collection of pieces on European writers. Of all four works the best that can be said is what Brooks himself says: "I conducted my education in public." One should add to that, however, a statement to the effect that it was a serious and interesting education, for Brooks was studying American characteristics at the same time that he was examining the modern products of an older civilization than ours.

America's Coming-of-Age was the result of his studies, and it was a work not only of remarkable maturity but of such

provocative and original thought that it became (and has remained) a milestone in American criticism. Its message may be quite simply outlined. Judged by the highest standards, American literature was a poor thing, Brooks argued. Of all the writers we have had, only one—Whitman—"comes home to a modern American," he said, "with that deep, moving, shaking impact of personality for which one turns to the abiding poets and writers of the world." In the rest, "a certain density, weight and richness, a certain piognancy, a 'something far more deeply interfused,' simply is not there." What, actually, was wrong? What had made our national letters deficient? He replied:

From the beginning we find two main currents in the American mind—both equally unsocial: on the one hand, the transcendental current, originating in the piety of the Puritans, becoming a philosophy in Jonathan Edwards, passing through Emerson, producing the fastidious refinement and aloofness of the chief American writers, and resulting in the final unreality of most contemporary culture; and on the other hand the current of catch-penny opportunism, originating in the practical shifts of Puritan life, becoming a philosophy in Franklin, passing through the American humorists, and resulting in the atmosphere of our contemporary business life.

In other words, our excessively practical and commercial society had driven sensitive and idealistic men into ignoring the common life of the common man, and the resulting divorce of American letters from the American reality was injurious to both. Our letters were unreal, our reality uninspired by spiritual ideals.

There was but one way out of this dilemma, Brooks believed. We had need of a social ideal "that shall work upon us as the sun acts upon a photographic plate"—an ideal that would fuse matter and spirit into an "organic whole." Personality must be made "to release itself

on a middle plane between vaporous idealism and self-interested practicality." "Self-fulfillment as an ideal" must be substituted for "self-assertion as an ideal. On the economic plane, this implies socialism; on every other plane it implies something which a majority of Americans in our day certainly do not possess—an object in living."

The rest of *America's Coming-of-Age* was an expansion and elucidation of these ideas. On the one hand, he continued his attack on the business community—the community of money-grubbing, vulgar advertising, and ferocious competition; on the other hand, he "arrived at some sort of basis for literary criticism" by arguing that, while to him Thoreau, Emerson, Poe, and Hawthorne were possessions forever, "this does not alter the fact that if my soul were set on the accumulation of dollars not one of them would have the power to move me from it."

The relationship between this book and *Opinions of Oliver Allston* (1941) is so obvious as to need little comment. Apparently, Brooks is entirely right in claiming, as he does, that he has never gone back on himself and that his point of view has remained the same. The question is discussed at some length by Brooks himself. He does so in reply to critics who maintain that he has quit the "arena," that he no longer engages actively in the great critical debates of our times, and that much of his later work has been mere "scholarly story-telling." The last phrase is my own, and by quoting it Brooks does me the honor of taking the accusation seriously. He seeks to clear himself of it, in *Opinions of Oliver Allston*, by insisting that, while in his earlier works he was concerned more with negation than with affirmation, both his negations and affirmations "had

the same root." He thinks that his critics "disliked this root and would not have accepted it in him if he had not shared some of their negations. This root was idealism. . . ."

It would seem that Brooks does not realize that a point of view—a complete philosophy, in fact—may be altered functionally while remaining textually unchanged. That is to say, if a critical point of view is put to different uses and serves different purposes, it changes even if the words it uses are the same. I believe that something of the sort can be demonstrated in Brooks's career. And I can think of no other way to explain why today he is a popular and respectable figure in spite of the fact that his values are verbally the same as they were twenty-five years ago, when he was regarded as the scourge of literary respectability.

Consider the role that Brooks played in the critical "arena" of the period 1915-25. *America's Coming-of-Age* appeared at a time when "the future of mankind was an exciting vista"—the era of Woodrow Wilson, an era of liberal and radical sentiments, universally felt, supported by the sense of well-being which had permeated our community, and apparently justified by optimistic reports of imminent social progress. Brooks's message was beautifully keyed to that atmosphere. It repudiated the rather stuffy, conventional belles lettres of the immediate past and anticipated a more vigorous future. It analyzed the failures of our traditional idealism and showed contemporary idealists how they could succeed. It castigated the reign of the "Babbitts" and described a society ruled by scholars and poets. Now, even if there was naïveté in all this, there were also harsh truths and a deeply felt humanitarianism. It is little wonder that

America's Coming-of-Age electrified the little circle of intellectuals who were then re-evaluating all our political, educational, and literary principles and who were to initiate in these fields the various liberal movements that are now our orthodoxies.

Brooks's next book, *Letters and Leadership* (1918), confirmed his position as the finest and surely the most eloquent spokesman of the liberal critics of American culture. I have called this brilliantly written book "an enlarged and bolder treatment of the residual theme of *America's Coming-of-Age*," for it studied the same problems and arrived at virtually the same conclusions as the previous book. It differed from it chiefly in an added emphasis on the need for leaders, "a race of artists," who would arouse exalted desires in our people. This new emphasis was by no means an insignificant matter, for it marked a decreasing interest in social analysis and an increasing interest in the individual problem. An essay on "The Literary Life in America," published in 1921, contributed nothing new to the point of view for which Brooks was now well known, but its description of the literary scene was remarkable for its overtones of anguish. There were enough hints of despair in it to persuade the reader that the author had succumbed to bitterness.

The individual problem—by which is meant the problem of the sensitive artist in a commercial environment—received Brooks's whole attention in two full-length studies of American writers: *The Ordeal of Mark Twain* (1920) and *The Pilgrimage of Henry James* (1925). In the first he described the artist who compromised with the conventions and tastes of his environment and, as a consequence, was frustrated and eventually lost something of his integrity. In the

second he described the artist who fled from his inhospitable environment to the riper centers of Europe and, as a consequence of this uprooting, this transference to a strange climate, "withered and wasted his genius." The American community was primitive, hence incapable of giving shelter to "the highly personalized human being." In the case of Mark Twain it prevented the development of personality; in the case of James it impelled an already developed personality to seek shelter in an alien community.

Much can be said in criticism of these works. Of *America's Coming-of-Age* it can be said that the very basis of his literary criticism was questionable, for it is doubtful that the writers of any nation at any time could move men from the accumulation of wealth if their souls were set upon it and that his analysis of the utilitarian character of the American mind was based upon an absolute idealism instead of an appreciation of historical forces. Of *Letters and Leadership* it can be said that the quest for leaders is the most futile of enterprises (and one that idealists are much given to), for, while it may not be necessarily true that leaders arise when the social movement is ripe for them, it is certainly true that leaders are ineffective if the social movement is *not* ripe; and therefore the proper field of study is the objective situation, not the subjective need for guidance. Of the book on Mark Twain it can be said that there is no evidence that he would have been a better writer or greater thinker in a different environment or that he had potentialities to be anything other than the man he actually was. Of the book on James it can be said that there is no evidence that James achieved less than he desired or that what he achieved was not sufficient for the kind of man he was. Of all these books, except *America's Coming-of-Age*,

it can be said that the elegiac tone of the otherwise superb prose style—the lingering upon pain, the sense of frustration, of failure, and at last of doom—composes a distorting factor in a critical analysis of a nation's cultural and social history.

In spite of all that—and even more could be said in rejection of specific observations about various writers—it was nevertheless true that these books were valuable. They were enormously stimulating, because they placed great responsibilities upon the writer and the scholar. They illuminated certain main currents in American life which had seldom before been examined in so sharp a light. They furnished ammunition to those who wanted to re-examine traditional notions about our past. They encouraged the widespread literary revolt against provincialism, the dominance of the business psychology, and the assumption that America was creating utopia.

Could the same things be said of Brooks's later books? In 1932 he gave us a *Life of Emerson* which was built almost entirely out of Emerson's own words and phrases. It was wholly lacking in analysis, interpretation, criticism, or even explanation. It was Emerson's self-portrait prepared by Van Wyck Brooks! In 1936 he gave us *The Flowering of New England* and in 1940 *New England: Indian Summer*. These are the books I have described as "scholarly story-telling." I do not know what else to call them. Brooks thinks they are history. But history is analysis, history is interpretation; and these books, like his *Life of Emerson*, are neither analytical nor interpretive. They are narratives of literary people, places, and schools. Professor Perry Miller's description of the *Indian Summer* will do for *The Flowering* as well:

In the main, the book is an imaginative re-creation of the authors and artists in their habit

as they lived. . . . It is compact of details, often trivial, of meetings, of houses, of friendships; it is a series of vignettes, a kaleidoscope of glimpses and tableaux, merging one into another. . . . The actors themselves embody the story and speak their own lines, to such an extent that page after page is compacted out of their own writings, phrases knit together or sentences paraphrased, but still their own words and not those of Mr. Brooks. . . .

They are pleasant books to read; they are entertaining and often picturesque and sometimes moving. But does anyone suppose that he will get from them a true or profound understanding of the periods and people with which they deal?

And yet they are not pointless books, and they are not mere accidents in the development of Brooks's thought. The intimations of despair and bitterness to which I have just pointed revealed a mood that would almost inevitably result in sterility, for his "negations" were becoming confessions of defeat. I suspect that, when Brooks realized this, he realized also his personal need for an affirmative approach. This he achieved by accepting those elements in the American past that did not conflict with his cherished values; and, in accepting them as sources of inspiration for today, he substituted sympathetic description for the critical attitude.

Thus his *Life of Emerson* was intended to be a foil to the books on James and Mark Twain, for Emerson was the whole man, the complete man, who was able to develop his personality and had neither to compromise with his environment nor to flee from it. But for this portrait of an American artist who had realized his potentialities and fulfilled his promise, Brooks had to go back to a preindustrial era. He found his ideal in a rural community, where manufacturing was still largely in a handicraft stage, and in a time when metaphysical idealism was the prevailing mode of thought. *The Flower-*

ing of New England was an enlargement of this thesis: the flowering occurred because men lived simply and individualistically, thought in ideal and spiritual terms, and despised the life of the city. Indian summer befell New England when industrialism conquered production, literary men moved to urban centers, life became complex and difficult, and materialism became the prevailing mode of thought.

It can now be demonstrated how his values have changed. Where once his socialism implied a challenge to collectivize our industrial society, it is now a wistful hope that we shall one day return to a simple agrarian community. Where once his plea for social responsibility on the part of writers suggested that they must bear the burden of actively guiding the masses, it is now a call to express noble ideals. Where once his cultural nationalism was an instrument to facilitate interpretation of our peculiar history, it is now a method for isolating the American experience from the rest of the world.

Brooks's values were once revolutionary. They are not so today. They are shared by large numbers of educated Americans. Indeed, his most ardent emotion of the moment—love for the village and animosity toward the city—is quite fashionable among city dwellers. His idealistic socialism outrages no one. His nationalism fits the mood of the present period perfectly. It may be that he has not personally quit the "arena." If so, the arena itself has moved away.

Brooks has always been on the side of the angels. Always he has stood for the things that most of us want—democracy and humanity in our life and our literature. That is enough to entitle any man to our respect and affection. He need not feel that, because his way of solving our problems is unreal to us, we therefore condemn the *kind* of solution he wants.

CREATIVE ROMANTICISM

DAVID F. ASH¹

I

Discussions of romanticism are difficult, if only for the initial difficulty presented by definition. "I have seen," said a student some fifty years ago, "many people who thought they could define Romanticism off-hand; but I have never seen one who could actually do it when brought to the test" (18:2). There are, of course, an infinite number of definitions. Many of these have been brought together and criticized in discussions by Phelps (18:1-6), Beers (6:1-23), and Lucas (17:1-54, 277-79); Babbitt has given us his picture of a Laocoöntic struggle with romantic pythons within himself (5); and Earnest has only recently brought together the best brief critical list of definitions available (12:347-48).

"What in fact is 'Romanticism'? What, historically, has it been? What can or should it be?" (17:9.) These questions by Lucas will serve us better than his own definition: "intoxicating dreaming . . . auto-intoxication"; "a liberation of the less-conscious levels of the mind" (17:35-36, 277). If these are adequate as definitions, romanticism "in fact" is cowardly escape from human life; "historically," a tragic mistake; in the future, something that "can or should" be expiated and forgotten.

However plausible the assumption that romanticism is foolish, criminal, or negligible, that assumption is not the only one possible; indeed, romantics might assert that contemporary thought is foolish or criminal by reason of neglect

arising from this very assumption, Romanticism is under a cloud, perhaps of its own making. Until those who criticize and study and teach our literature come to see some value in the romantic road, few of our younger writers are likely to take it. The vast majority will take other roads, marked on the critical maps as properly paved and leading to objectives recognized and approved.

For some forty years that is what they have been doing. Consider Harry Hayden Clark's Preface to Hartwick's highly readable study of the American novel. We are told that Hartwick seems to have dealt fairly with four "fundamental alignments" of recent American fiction, "to have relived each group's vision of life with sympathy and objectivity." Judging by the small number of pages given it, romanticism has indeed become negligible: 163 pages to "the naturalistic superman's quest of the primitive, the strong, and the ruthless"; 90 pages to "the social revolt of . . . novelists . . . whose desire is to create a new social order looking toward either socialism or anarchy"; 107 pages to the New Humanism latterly so prominent; but only 33 pages to "the desire of such men as Cabell and Hergesheimer to escape from an unpleasant reality into a paradise of beauty" (13:v-vii).

Romanticism, however, has been and may again become something more than indolent futilitarianism; "it can be shown, I believe," says Ernest, "that the work of the most important English romantic writers does not come under this heading at all. Far from trying to escape

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reality, these writers were in search of just that" (12:349). Furthermore, it seems to me that many of these romantics came at least fairly close to what they sought (7:11-12). If they failed, whether nobly or feebly, to remold the world nearer their hearts' desire, we have small reason to love that same world unreservedly today.

II

Endeavoring to cram a complex and organic movement into eight words of definition, let me say that "romanticism was a medieval renaissance, abortive because premature." Whether this will cover everything supposedly romantic or not, it does cover the so-called "pre-romantics" of the eighteenth century and a great deal of the most imposing Victorian literature. Furthermore, it may logically be developed into not merely an explanation of pre-Edwardian literature but a dynamic theory of man's relationship to the world and to his Creator.

This, then, would seem to be the answer to Lucas' three questions: romanticism is a movement, as yet unfocused and wavering, to regain the medieval conception of man's spiritual nature and adequately to express that nature, not only in art-forms, literary and otherwise, but in all other aspects of life; it has been a rich culture, that of the late Middle Ages, followed by the breakdown into modern chaos; what it can or should be is an eclectic but critical salvaging and reconstruction of "the best that has been said and done in the world"—a return, perhaps, to the Middle Ages, but not with empty hands.

This conception of romanticism is neither popular nor new. "We must not . . . look on the romantic movement as merely a return to the Middle Ages," says Babbitt (5:31); for Lucas the medi-

eval is not a "fundamental quality" or an "essential part of the romantic" (17:277, 47); to Earnest, only the lesser "Miniver Cheevy" school was medieval, and a pungent attack by H. G. Wells on romanticism (27:1045-47) is met by concession:

The force of such an attack comes from the fact that much of what Mr. Wells says is true—from the Gothic novel to the *Idylls of the King* the Miniver Cheevy theme has hung like the albatross about the neck of romantic literature. The haunting beauty of individual works like "The Eve of St. Agnes" cannot refute the charge that this kind of literature was reactionary, that it was a literature of escape. It bore the same relation to its time that the Princeton chapel bears to modern architecture. A medieval stained-glass window, whether in Keats or in Princeton, is all the more dangerous because of the extreme skill with which it is done. "The Eve of St. Agnes" leads directly to the "Lady of Shallott" and the "Blessed Damozel" [12:348].

Defining "the romantic temper as a sense of the mystery of the universe and the perception of its beauty," the "romantic road" as "the attempt to understand this mystery through intuition or imagination," Earnest attributes this "intuitive approach to reality" to the "Intimations school" (12:347-48, 353 ff.). It seems to me, however, that reaction is not essentially escape; that medieval revival is essentially neither weakly languorous or dangerously futilitarian; that one Miniver Cheevy—or even a million of him—inactively dreaming does not logically compel us to shrug away a Morris, a Carlyle, or a Ralph Adams Cram. "Dreams are not only a substitute for reality; they may be the creative foreshadowing of a new world" (12:359).

However unpopular and apparently outmoded, the old phrase of Beers can still be made to apply to much before and after the Lake School: "reproduction in modern art or literature of the Middle Ages" (6:2). As I have said, the renaissance was abortive because it was prema-

ture; little was known of the Middle Ages by the time of Chatterton and Walpole; only in our own century, and largely because of the "Gothick" revival, are we able to see how tremendous it might have been with our own greater knowledge. Consider Heine's famous characterization of the German movement.

Was aber war die romantische Schule in Deutschland? Sie war nichts anders als die Wiedererweckung der Poesie des Mittelalters, wie sie sich in dessen Liedern, Bild- und Bauwerken, in Kunst und Leben, manifestiert hatte. Die Poesie in allen diesen Gedichten trägt einen bestimmten Character, wodurch sie sich von der Poesie der Griechen und Römer unterscheidet. In Betreff dieses Unterschieds nennen wir erstere die romantische und letztere die klassische Poesie [18:2; 6:2].

Thanks to the romantic revival itself, it is possible in our own century to know medieval art and the medieval mind far better than Heine could, or Keats, or even Morris. It is possible today to study more objectively, and hence largely to revalue, not only medieval culture but the humanistic revolution of the Renaissance. Throughout our own period, Cram reminds us, medieval civilization "was misjudged and misrepresented by historians and forgotten by the world at large" (11:16). Even today, many will no doubt be shocked by a textbook's matter-of-fact reference to modern chaos: "a progressive disintegration which has led . . . away from the unity of thought and feeling achieved in Europe in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries" (21:255), that "progressive disintegration—of society, of beliefs and standards, of character, and of form in art—which has been a central feature of our times" (22:1072).

This same contrast was visible to Henry Adams. When he was beginning his great *Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres*, he already had in mind *The Education of*

Henry Adams: the one was "a study of Thirteenth-Century Unity"; the other, "of Twentieth-Century Multiplicity" (1:435). Again he puts the contrast rather brutally: "the kinetic theory of gas is an assertion of ultimate chaos. In plain words, Chaos was the law of nature; Order was the dream of man" (1:451). The problem of this contrast and its resolution seems to me, if not, indeed, the central problem of our times, at least fundamental in the questions put by Lucas of the nature of romanticism past, present, and future.

III

A survey of the problem historically seems to require pigeonholes of tentative definition. As Beers acutely remarks, "romanticism is a word which faces in two directions. It is now opposed to realism, as it was once opposed to classicism" (6:23). This trichotomy is essential to the understanding of romanticism, although most clearly and most often presented in the critical work of its ostensible enemies. "I myself," said Babbitt, "am fond of distinguishing three levels on which a man may experience life—the naturalistic, the humanistic, and the religious" (5:xix). A passage in Stuart Sherman gives the doctrine more fully:

. . . . On the lowest plane is the natural world . . . ; on this level the regulation is by necessary or natural law. On the middle level is the human world . . . governed by reason, the special human faculty; and illumined more or less from the level above. On the third level is the supernatural world, which is the plane of spiritual beings, and the home of eternal ideas [23:294].

Humanism, says Hartwick, "divides the universe into three levels" (13:297); but the trichotomy is in no way the peculiar property of the New Humanism. Aldous Huxley, whom Shafer well sums up as "a believer in a kind of non-Chris-

tian mysticism" (22:1070), permits the mouthpiece-character, Propter, to reject the personality not alone of God but also of the individual human being (15:101 ff). On the "strictly human level" of "time and craving," only evil can be achieved; but two other levels exist: "the animal level," otherwise "the level below the human"; and "the level of eternity; the level, if you don't object, of God; the level of the spirit . . . the most ambiguous word in the language" (15:133-36). Here is neither traditional religion nor the New Humanism.

The completely romantic point of view, it seems to me, involves a threefold conception of man's nature, a corresponding division of man's artistic ways, and the doctrine of romanticism as a renaissance. The romantic will follow Babbitt and Huxley in their triple division of man's nature, establishing thereby a hierarchy of values. Historically, the course of modern culture since the humanistic revival of learning has been a continuous degradation of this hierarchy. The sword of rationalism has two edges; cutting away his acceptance of traditional religious values with one edge, modern man soon found himself cutting away also his acceptance of human values. "The naturalist is a monist, the humanist a dualist" (13:306); the romantic is, or should be, a trialist, rejecting both rationalisms—the elder dualistic and the younger monistic.

The eighteenth-century Gothic revival can be justified logically by the application of the foregoing hierarchy of values to man's artistic behavior in medieval and modern civilization. The architecture of the Middle Ages, particularly after the eleventh century, was essentially religious; classical and Renaissance architecture was essentially intellectual; and modern "functional" or "modernis-

tic" architecture is essentially naturalistic, emphasizing the physical relation of man's body to the natural world. In the physical and visible field of architecture it is possible to trace the progressive disintegration of thirteenth-century unity into twentieth-century multiplicity by the slow shifting of stress or emphasis like a pointer moving downward across the planes of the scale of values: medieval, stressing the spirit; classical or humanistic, stressing the rational intellect; and late modern, stressing monistically the natural world.

Feeling this degradation, desiring to surmount rationalism and return to a full scale of values, modern man must inevitably set himself in opposition to modernism itself. Given a threefold conception of man's nature, with a corresponding division of his artistic ways, the choice is clearly indicated for those no longer satisfied with modern rationalism and what has been called so often "the architecture of humanism." To regain the earlier conception of man, not as "mere flesh or mere mind or mere spirit but as, at his healthiest and completest, a fine concord and harmony of the three" (23:273), the romantic rebel against modernism needs to inaugurate a counterrenaissance to regain much of what was lost when Christian-Feudal culture was overwhelmed by humanism. If medieval architecture lifts man superhumanly above his ordinary rational self and modern architecture depresses him subhumanly below this self, he will choose to rise if he possibly can.

IV

The romantic doctrine of renaissance does not concern itself alone with past failure; there is also the future, growing so mysteriously out of the present. Always before, when culture has declined

into chaos, out of chaos eventually has again come culture. There is even a sort of rhythm to this alternation, a cycle roughly regular; and culture is again due (II:V-xi, I-4).

In the fewest possible words the law would seem to be this: *Rising out of two centuries of disorderly chaos, a culture goes through three centuries of orderly evolution, sinking again through disorderly chaos.* The entire cycle, in other words, occupies a period of seven centuries; but, since each period rises out of the two centuries of chaos into which the preceding period sank, there is an overlapping which reduces each period to a net five centuries.²

In our own century civilization is unmistakably crumbling into chaos; but so was it before, at the time of the Revival of Learning—and romantics will hardly fail to press the analogy. If history continues to repeat itself, we are merely going through the chaotic phase presented by the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, or the ninth and tenth, or the fourth and fifth, or the two hundred years in which "the glory that was Greece" took a long curve downward across the upslant of "the grandeur that was Rome." Chaos has come again but will go as it has before; and once more across the downslant of the old will arise the upslant of the new.³

There is, of course, nothing fatalistic in the romantic approach. We cannot convincingly force history into the Procrustean bed of cast-iron law; and utterly to predict a future known to God alone is unthinkable. Nevertheless, without rejecting free will or professing to find in

history nothing but stuttering repetition, the romantic may still believe with Cram that a new age is close at hand: "The new paganism has had its era of five centuries and no definite epoch has ever lasted beyond this period" (II:200). That the new age is coming at all he cannot predict, much less what its nature will be; what he wishes it to be, however, he can surely tell, and from tracing a rough periodicity in human affairs he may derive legitimate hope that a romantic revival is not yet impossible.

When "Hellenic civilization was cut short that Rome might have her day," there began also "the first five centuries of the Christian era"; when "Rome fell and Mediterranean culture yielded to the barbarism of the North," another five-century period began, that "we call roughly the Dark Ages." After this period came yet another, for twentieth-century romanticism will discriminate between "two . . . epochs of five centuries each." If one was largely dark, the other was bright with "radiant beauty" (II).

Even the Barbaric Period has the virtue of "arduous growth, not into civilization, but toward it"; for the romantic, however, this period is interesting mainly for its two phases of chaos. If one all but annihilated Greco-Roman culture in the Western Empire, it resulted also in a disciplining of the new barbaric national states by the remainder of that culture as conserved and Christianized by the church; and, if the other brought the collapse of Carolingian civilization, it ushered in also the great epoch of Gothic architecture and romance (II).

That our own age resembles the earlier of these two is increasingly obvious. "Today," says H. W. Van Loon, "we see the history of Rome during the Fourth Century repeating itself" (26); and W. H. Chamberlin considers that the fall of

² The general doctrine of a five-century cycle and an overdue medieval renaissance permeates Cram; but for the statement here I alone am responsible.

³ Poe dimly adumbrates a cyclic doctrine in "Mellonta Tauta" and elsewhere.

France "must have resounded through the world like that of Rome in the fifth century" (10). The same testimony came but recently from abroad. "We are headed toward a new epoch comparable to the one following the fall of the Roman Empire" (14).

In the closing phase of the Roman Period, classical civilization was almost completely extinguished (11:18-21). "The depth of that ruin is not generally realized in its full horror"; but we need not agree with Briffault that from the fifth to the ninth century "Europe lay in a night of barbarism which grew darker and darker" (8:110). Cram's judgment is more favorable:

... Charlemagne was not a single figure of light and power, shot headlong, cometwise, through the night of the Dark Ages; he was rather the crest and culmination of a long, slow, upward sweep of recovery, the origin of which was far away at the very beginning of that sixth century that saw the ending of one era, the opening of another . . . (11:133-34).

Across the downslant of the Barbaric Period rose the upslant of a new civilization. Believing himself a mortal body housing an immortal soul, medieval man sought to make the best of two worlds. For his physical welfare in one, he tried by feudalism to create, maintain, perfect a universal state in the Empire; for spiritual welfare in the other, he submitted himself to the church in preparation for the life eternal. Body and soul, lay and ecclesiastic, temporal and eternal—everywhere in life and thought we find the same antithesis. Because of its complexly organic dualism we may call the age itself the "Christian-Feudal Period." For much the same reason it was a period of order and of freedom, of concentration and expansion. Great brotherhoods within the double framework of society were assembling, concentrating, constructing; but always respect for person-

ality was fundamental. Feudal society was "made up of human units linked by the human bonds of personal attachment and reciprocal duties and privileges" (11:127-28).

We have, then, a doubly organized universal commonwealth, recognizing "the great principle of human association through manageable social units" (11:107) and seeking an organic balance between freedom and order, leadership and service. Everywhere art is an integral part of life—a richly complex art reconciling freedom with order by the vital synthetic process which made of the faulty work of individual craftsmen those great structures we know as Gothic abbeys and cathedrals, romantic cycles in verse and prose, the liturgy of the church, and all the gloriously ordered pageantry with which the Christian-Feudal Period was able to express every man's passionately romantic love alike for his Creator and for his fellow-man.

This, I feel, was the essential creative spirit of the age—the *Poesie des Mittelalters*. "If ever the *elan vital* rose to inordinate heights of untrammelled creation, it was then," during "the age of increasing art in every category" (11:110); and its mystical passion for goodness, for truth, for beauty, was the "poetry" that Eugene Jolas calls "the manifestation of man's tendency toward eluding the three-dimensional prison of existence and toward the conquest of Time and Space"; "a mode of thinking that was once called *dionysian, byzantine, gothic, baroque, romantic*" (16:6-7).

V

The aim of recent romanticism should logically be to transform the culture of the Modern Period as did humanism the Christian-Feudal culture. The Gothic revival seems to have moved in this direc-

tion: "if the analogy is not pushed too far," Beers ventures, "the romantic revival may be regarded as a faint counterpart of the renaissance" (6:29).

Even without humanism, the Christian-Feudal Period must have come to a close; it was the function of this operative spirit to destroy an already decadent civilization. "When, in 1270, St. Louis . . . went to his reward, the climax had been reached, . . . and, as always in history, the curve began to decline" (11:158). If humanism "acted as a solvent on the mediaeval idea of the Empire" at first and later "on the mediaeval idea of the Church" (25), it did not so much destroy a Christian commonwealth as prevent its regeneration. War and disease had ravaged almost the whole of the West, and a long series of disasters or blunders had culminated in the supreme folly of papal-imperial strife, the "Babylonian captivity" of the popes, and the virtual extinction of the Empire. It was an age as dark as our own, or any other chaotic phase:

After St. Louis and St. Thomas, after Rheims and Dante, the curve was bound to decline. Already a very unpleasant form of heresy had raised its head in the south of France; the Crusades had degenerated into marauding expeditions, and in the very first years of the fourteenth century the French crown had seized upon the Papacy, establishing over it the secular control Hildebrand had died to avert. . . . Abandoned by its secular and spiritual sovereigns Italy lapsed at once into anarchy and an encroaching barbarism: in Germany the Empire broke down and a new and vicious form of feudalism took its place: the Hundred Years' War devastated France and debauched the moral sense of England, while the Black Death swept over Europe like a pestilential flood . . . [11:184].

In the eyes of recent romanticism, the Black Death was not the only "pestilential flood" in this chaotic phase: to Ruskin in the nineteenth century, humanism

released "a flood of folly and hypocrisy" (19:I, 22); to Cram in the twentieth, the fall of Constantinople poured over Italy "the flood of decadent philosophy, evil morals, and false learning that had festered there during the last years of Byzantine corruption" (11:263).

Criminal and cruel, unmentionably vicious and overweeningly proud, the despots of the fourteenth century were liberal patrons of humanism. Such a "solvent" was useful politically; the new-old architecture of humanism lent itself to an imposing parade of power; the humanistic professors and professionals were skilful at fulsome praise for patrons and scurrilous abuse of enemies; and many a powerful despot was a sincere lover of humanism—like the unspeakably foul Lord of Rimini, "Neo-Pagan of the fifteenth century," who "might be selected as a true type of the princes who united a romantic zeal for culture with the vices of barbarians" (25).

The upslant of the Modern Period began with Petrarch, "the first and . . . greatest of the humanists" (25). Largely because of his pioneer efforts, a conscious endeavor was begun to recover the literature, art, and philosophy of pre-Christian civilization; "men of that time, participating in the movement, felt that what was taking place was a rebirth of civilization after a long night, or perhaps nightmare, of barbarism" (21:251-56). According to Sihler,

. . . Petrarch is the pathfinder as well as the exemplar of the new movement. He idealized the classical world, he read into such Latin letters as he had, or extracted as he could, profound and surpassing verities. His classicist consciousness and his Christian consciousness are revealed in his writings like two streams that do not intermingle though they flow in the same bed . . . [20:401].

Essentially the two cultures were antagonistic. Petrarch "remains endlessly in-

teresting because of his own clear consciousness of the opposition between the Christian and the classical, or pagan, views of life"; "he knew it, felt it within himself, and wrestled with it unsuccessfully through a great part of his life" (21:254). The chaos within Petrarch typifies the chaos of an age of transition. "The Christian within him wrestled vigorously with the nascent Pagan"; for Italy first, and then for all Europe, it was paganism that won (25).

Out of chaos came, as before, an evolutionary phase of three centuries. Beginning as humanism, ending as materialism, the modern spirit continued its curve through this phase without a break; for both were essentially rationalistic. The seventeenth century bears a curious resemblance to the twelfth. Each contains the mid-point of its own evolutionary phase: the earlier marks the middle of the Christian-Feudal Period, containing within itself the central half-century when Romanesque flowered into Gothic; and the later marks the middle of the Modern Period, containing within itself the conversion of humanism into naturalism. The rise of science during the seventeenth century turned the attention first of philosophy and then of education downward from stressing man himself to stressing his physical environment (21:653-54; 22:3-4). "Considered broadly, it was a change from humanism to rationalism" (21:654); or, since rationalism is of two sorts, we may say that an earlier dualism was transforming itself into a monism still current.

Romanticism emerges in the eighteenth century—but not in any sense as a revolution. True, it would seem that "the beginnings of the English Romantic movement should date back to the first quarter of the eighteenth century; and that during the second quarter, and espe-

cially during the fifth decade, the strength of the movement was much greater" than was commonly supposed in the nineteenth century (18:6); but, even so, the movement was "gradual and unconscious" (18:173). Nor did it succeed, either in its own time or in the century which followed. The romantic writers in both centuries "were a small minority engaged in rebellion," with "no great immediate effect on the national life or thought" (22:49). The relentless modern curve continued unchecked until the coming of the chaotic phase. "It was left for the nineteenth century to perform the work of which the eighteenth only prophesied" (6:424). Unfortunately, the chaotic phase began with naturalistic victory and romantic defeat. A number of writers won popularity and personal success, but without influencing deeply the life and thought of their time; "the full romantic impulse was felt by only a small number of people" (22:5); "the dominant literature of the nineteenth century was romantic," but "the age itself was not" (22:49).

Unquestionably the pre-Victorian romantics produced a body of finely wrought literature of enduring significance and beauty (22:1068); but "their rebellion was unavailing, in part because of their own failures" (22:1072). The same can be said of the so-called Victorian "prophets," who condemned their own civilization fiercely—but, like Cassandra, foretold doom to unbelieving ears. For Carlyle, for Ruskin, for Morris in turn, the times were out of joint. Each in his own way laid stress on the superior values of the Middle Ages; and together they constitute a "romantic line" of opposition to the chaos into which the cultural curve was descending and out of which their romanticism would start a new ascending curve across the down-

slant of the old. Taken together, these three men complement and correct one another: if Carlyle cares too harshly little for beauty, his disciple Ruskin stresses the necessity of beauty and the joys of craftsmanship; and extremes very nearly find a golden mean in Ruskin, if we let Carlyle's fascism cancel Morris' un-Marxian socialism. Each has his virtues and his faults, but these men of the romantic line compare not unfavorably with Petrarch and Boccaccio five hundred years before them.

Largely through the strong influence of Rossetti on Morris, there is a close connection between the Pre-Raphaelite school and the main romantic line; but on the whole this collateral movement followed the modern downslant of naturalism by "aesthetic" escape from all intellectual and moral problems into a dreamland of narcotic beauty. Humanistic Arnold and Catholic Newman also stand separate from the main romantic line. Arnold saw clearly the terrible evils that romanticism was attacking; he too sought recovery of lost values by return to the past; but he found his cure for the ills of the age in the very Hellenism from which, according to Ruskin, these ills had arisen. Romanticism needed Arnold in many ways, as courageous ally and calm, clear critic; but Arnold, himself emotionally romantic,

Wandering between two worlds, one dead,
The other powerless to be born,

stood also in dire need of allies—and hope.

If the separation of Arnold from the romantic line is his own fault, the same cannot be said of Newman. By entering the Roman communion, he was only returning to the universal church from which the culture of the Christian-Feudal Period had received unity and spiritual

power. Whether the conscience of the contemporary romantic would lead him to make the same choice or not, he will recognize at least that Newman sought peace and found it.

In the last year of the nineteenth century, Ruskin's death ended the main romantic line. Within a generation, the whole Victorian era had been contemptuously rejected by triumphant naturalism, shoveling carelessly together not only Pre-Raphaelites, Tractarians, and the "prophets" who could not unit them but also the pagan or compromising or "scientific" exponents of the sinking curve romanticism could not quite cross. "To-day it is possible to see the meaning of the whole reaction, as well as the need for it, more clearly than could some of the participants" (22:21); and this, though said of the pre-Victorian movement, will apply to the Victorians as well.

We know, for one thing, that in their attacks on contemporary civilization they had reason more acute than we attribute to Miniver Cheevy; and their direst prophecies are coming true. Here, for example, is a passage from a recent anthology:

Literature in the twentieth century reads like a swelling voice of complaint. Everywhere social and individual confusion reigns, and there is every evidence that we are in an age of transition in which the strength of an old order dies and a new order has not clearly come to birth . . . [2:27].

The statement is true of conditions to-day; but everything in it was said by the despised Victorians in their own century. We recognize at once Arnold's "two worlds, one dead"—or is it Tennyson's "old order" dying "lest one good custom should corrupt the world" or O'Shaughnessy's "dream that is dying"? In this context, it seems to be Arnold, who also said, more than seventy years

ago: "Everywhere we see the beginnings of confusion, and we want a clue to some sound order and authority" (3:562).

It was not only Arnold who saw this; Carlyle, too, spoke of "the confused wreck of revolutionary things . . . crashing and tumbling all round us" (9:20-21); "the foundations of society," declared Ruskin, "were never yet shaken as they are at this day" (19:II, 149). The remedy sought by the romantic line was a return to the medieval synthesis: belief in the spiritual nature of the universe, the immortality of the soul, the sacredness of personality, the insufficiency of mere reason, the necessity of beauty and joy in life, and every man's duty of loving God with all his heart, and his neighbor as himself.

Because they saw these values best expressed in the culture of the Middle Ages, these men sought to revive that culture. It is for this reason that we call them "romantic" in the broadest and yet the sharpest sense of that term, which means quite clearly "of or pertaining to romance" and must therefore apply correctly to the characteristic literature of the Christian-Feudal Period; to the men for whom and the time during which these romances were written; to the manners and beliefs and the entire structure of art and life in that period, including the rich, complexly organic synthesis known to architecture as Gothic.

Their romanticism was defeated by a victorious Victorianism: "a triumph of mechanics over man, of means over ends, of the herd over individuality, of vulgarity over taste, and of fear over honesty—all in the name of magnificent progress toward a democratic millennium" (22:454). Largely, romanticism was a failure, on the part of great men who came too soon, to unit a series of roughly converging revolts that never quite came into

focus; partly a defect in faith, in character, in knowledge of what Christian-Feudal culture had actually been, what its fundamentals were, and how it could be regained. The renaissance was abortive because premature. They could not know as much as we are able to know today as the result of their partial and qualified success; through ignorance or personal deficiency, they were unable to be sufficiently romantic.

Their romanticism was a spiritual battle for control of their own souls—for within them, as within their contemporary opponents, the antagonistic impulses of two separate ages were contending for mastery. As in Petrarch a waning paganism wrestled with a waning Christianity, so in Arnold a doubting humanism and a yearning romanticism deadlocked each other until one was dead, the other "powerless to be born." Something like this can be seen in the sweet melancholy of his romantic "Dover Beach":

And we are here as on a darkling plain,
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and
flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

In the human soul today, as in the world of affairs, "ignorant armies clash by night"; but the full romantic will continue to assert the ultimate spiritual possibility of joy and love and light, of certitude and peace and help for pain that Arnold's humanistic pessimism thought impossible. Clinging to a faith in the ultimate reality of goodness and truth and beauty, believing steadfastly that love is the law of the universe, the romantic will continue to struggle for the coming of God's kingdom on earth, in the conviction that heavens are handmade rather than machine made and likely to look a bit Gothic when anywhere near a speaking likeness.

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THE THEME OF DESPAIR IN MARLOWE'S *FAUSTUS*JOHN C. McCLOSKEY¹

Because of his soaring ambition Faustus rises to extraordinary power; but he does not fall, as has been asserted, because fate or the forces of nature are too strong for him. Neither fate nor the forces of nature have anything to do with it. It is through a defect in character that he becomes entangled in his difficul-

ties, but it is through a defect in faith that he ultimately succumbs. If *The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus* is a Renaissance play, it is also a medieval one. In it there is no question of justifying the ways of God to man; Faustus' choice is the deliberate choice of evil; and the play illustrates the thesis that the man who, for whatever reason, sins and then despairs of divine forgiveness has, because he denies to himself the grace and the

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mercy of God, no hope of salvation. Faustus is, undoubtedly, the embodiment of the Renaissance thirst for knowledge, but he is, at the same time, an illustration of the medieval concept of despair—the sin against the Holy Ghost. Through excessive pride of intellect he falls, yet it is through despair that he fails to rise again. The Prologue chorus makes it clear that his original sin is towering pride and unbounded ambition, but most of the play subsequent to his signing of the contract with the devil makes it just as clear that his fatal sin is despair.

Faustus is a man of boundless pride and passionate ambition, a rebellious individualist so swollen with knowledge and self-confidence that his grasp exceeds his reach and "the Heavens conspire his overthrow." He craves unlimited power got through knowledge; and, like the fallen angels in their revolt against God, he aspires to more than is legitimate. "Yet art thou still but Faustus," he cries, "and a man." It is necromancy—traffic with the devil himself—which will make Faustus more than human, will make him like a god. Magic will bring him a world of profit and delight, of power, of honor, and of omnipotence. Tempted by his thirst for knowledge and power, he yields.

A sound magician is a mighty god:

Here, Faustus, try thy brains to gain a deity.

Before he makes the decision which precipitates him into the complications which lead to the catastrophe, there occurs a struggle between the good angels and the evil angels for the soul of Faustus. It is his choice to align himself with the one or with the other. Rash, impulsive, youthful, he is heedless of the twenty-four years which stretch out before him like an eternity. The powers of darkness having promised to make him

more than mortal, Faustus abjures the Trinity, which promises him nothing, and prays devoutly to the Prince of Hell. Aspiring pride and insolence are no less Faustus' fault than Lucifer's. With the help of Mephistophilis, Faustus will be "great Emperor of the world." Faustus' choice of evil as his good is the conscious act of his own free will; his weighing of the relative merits of the good and of the evil alternatives is presented in the speeches of the good and of the evil spirits—the former urging heaven upon him through the hard path of prayer, contrition, and repentance, the latter seducing him with visions of earthly honor, wealth, and power. These alternatives are clearly and fairly presented before Faustus makes his choice. Faustus falls through the exercise of free will; there is no determinism here. Yet he feels cunningly safe in his devilish bargain with Mephistophilis, for he is skeptical about the very existence of hell. "Come," he says, "I think hell's a fable."

In medieval religious thought, repentance follows sin as does day the night, unless the sinner is bereft of faith or unless, suffering from the illusion that his sin is unforgivable, he falls victim to the additional sin of black despair or unless he becomes so hardened in the course of sin that repentance is spiritually and psychologically impossible. In Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus* it is the man of the Renaissance who sins originally, but it is the medieval man of the morality plays who in the scene following the hellish contract desires repentance. "I will renounce this magic and repent." Faustus is not yet lost; his decision is not irrevocable; there is a turning-back, for all sins are forgiven except presumption and despair. "Faustus, repent; yet God will pity thee," whispers the Good Angel.

Faustus has succumbed to temptation

because of his lust for more than human knowledge and power. But that is not the reason for his final fall. If he repents and begs God's forgiveness, he will yet be saved, will escape hell, and will avoid the consequences of his contract with the powers of evil. Throughout the drama subsequent to his yielding to the temptation to eat of the Tree of Knowledge, the real issue is between repentance and despair. It is the sin of despair which effects the catastrophe. No matter what the sin, repentance and salvation are always possible unless, through despair, man sins against the Holy Ghost. "Never too late," says the Good Angel, "if Faustus can repent." Faustus prays:

Ah, Christ, my Savior,
Seek to save distressed Faustus' soul.

Though the contest between good and evil for the soul of Faustus, between repentance and despair, continues, Lucifer prevails. Faustus abandons thoughts of heaven and for years revels in wickedness. Yet the prize for which he has sold his body and soul to the devil seems puny beside the cost; for eternal damnation he has bought a bit of knowledge, some boyish pranks, the occasional public performance of a few feats of magic, and the temporary gratification of sensual desire.

But even when the termination of the contractual period draws near, Faustus is not yet lost. An old man endeavors to move him to repentance and to guide his steps to celestial rest. God's mercy, the old man assures him, will wash away Faustus' guilt if he will repent. "Despair and die!" is the answer of Faustus. "Ah, stay, good Faustus," the old man pleads, "stay thy desperate steps." He knows that Faustus can yet achieve heaven, for he says:

I see an angel hovers o'er thy head,
And, with a vial full of precious grace,

Offers to pour the same into thy soul.
Then call for mercy, and avoid despair!

Faustus agrees to ponder his sins:

I do repent; and yet I do despair;
Hell strives with grace for conquest in
my breast.
What shall I do to shun the snares of
death?

So sharply does he waver in his allegiance to the devil that Mephistophilis angrily calls him traitor and commands him to "revolt." It is then that Faustus acknowledges his commission of the second sin against the Holy Ghost—presumption—which is, oddly, but the reverse side of his despair:

Sweet Mephistophilis, entreat thy lord
To pardon my unjust presumption,
And with my blood again I will confirm
My former vow I made to Lucifer.

Mephistophilis knows, however, that his victim may escape him yet, that he need not keep his bargain. "His faith is great," mutters the devil, "I cannot touch his soul."

At the climactic moment when Faustus may still save himself, elude the devil, and escape the awful consequences of his dreadful bargain, he falls again, this time not from lust of knowledge or of power but from concupiscence; unexpectedly yielding to the frailty of the flesh, he asks to have unto his paramour that heavenly Helen

Whose sweet embracings may extinguish clean
These thoughts that do dissuade me from my
vow,
And keep mine oath I made to Lucifer.

Kissing Helen, he exclaims:

Her lips suck forth my soul; see where it flies!—
Come, Helen, come, give me thy soul again.
Here will I dwell, for Heaven be in these lips,
And all is dross that is not Helena.

Yet heaven still waits for Faustus, though through lust he excludes from his soul "the grace of Heaven."

In the last scene of the play he regrets his course of life. "Ah, my sweet chamber-fellow," he laments to the First Scholar, "had I lived with thee, then had I lived still! but now I die eternally." But, unfortunately, he cannot repent and beg God's forgiveness, for he is guilty of the sin of despair.

But Faustus' offences can never be pardoned; the serpent that tempted Eve may be sav'd, but not Faustus. . . . Though my heart pants and quivers to remember that I have been a student here these thirty years, oh, would I had never seen Wittenberg, never read book! And what wonders have I done, all Germany can witness, yea, the world; for which Faustus hath lost both Germany and the world, yea Heaven itself, Heaven, the seat of God, the throne of the blessed, the kingdom of joy; and must remain in hell for ever, hell, ah, hell, for ever! Sweet friends! what shall become of Faustus being in hell for ever?

The Third Scholar bids him call on God. Faustus cannot, yet he tries hard. He fully realizes that he has made a bad bargain, that for his cunning he has given his soul to Lucifer and Mephistophilis. For the "vain pleasures of twenty-four years" he has lost eternal happiness. Now it is too late, he thinks, for repentance and forgiveness. Nothing, he sadly asserts, can rescue him; to hell he must go. Yet while man lives there is hope, and faith can conquer despair; so in this morality play the contest between good and evil for the soul of Faustus continues to the end.

. . . or let this hour be but
A year, a month, a week, a natural day,
That Faustus may repent and save his soul!

In his despair he blames the devil for pulling him down when he would leap up unto his God; he fancies that the mercy of God is withdrawn from him and that, frowningly rejecting him, God refuses to save him from damnation. Too grievous has been his sin, so he thinks, for the wrath of God to endure.

Ah, God, he prays in his despair, if Thou will not have mercy on my soul, let there be some ultimate end to Faustus' pain in hell. His soul, he is convinced, must live in hell, plagued forever. Though he curses Lucifer, who has deprived him of the joys of heaven, his despair of God's merciful forgiveness precludes his salvation. His last cry, "My God! my God! look not so fierce on me!" is the terrible cry of anguished despair. Although the Epilogue chorus indicates that Faustus' "hellish fall" illustrates the theme of the folly of attempting "to practice more than heavenly power permits," Faustus might have been saved even at the last moment had he repented sincerely of his original and subsequent sins.

If the early part of *The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus* portrays the effects of excessive pride and soaring ambition, the latter part illustrates the effects of the sin of despair. Pride and ambition precipitate Faustus' difficulties, but it is despair which finally and irrevocably ruins him.

THE TEACHER WITH AN UNDERGRADUATE MIND

FRED H. STOCKING¹

At the 1940 meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English in Boston, the speakers all discussed the vital—yet touchy—subject of graduate study in English as preparation for college teaching. First, a representative of an engineering school, whose job it is to hire teachers for the English department, informed us that he frankly relied on the general principle that the most promising candidates are those who have not absorbed the indoctrinations of the graduate school. At the close of his talk a few of the more elderly scholars who had dutifully made themselves present rose from their chairs, eased themselves into the corridor, and pronounced the meeting “dreary.”

The next speaker was a former professor of English who now sits in an easy chair pursuing his business of editing and editorializing. He mournfully observed that the minds of college English teachers are notorious for being perpetually out of date, from three to five years behind the rest of the intellectual world. He refused to attribute this intellectual sluggishness either to the graduate schools or to anything else; for even if he *could* fix the blame, he said with a shrug of his shoulders, he did not believe that the brand of human being who teaches English is capable of reform. At this point a few of the young intellectuals in the audience rose from their seats, strode off to the corridor, and pronounced the meeting “futile.”

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The subsequent talks were more comforting. The chairman of a large graduate English department described certain noble attempts made at his institution to train teachers without altering either the fundamental aims or the traditional machinery of the graduate program. And a member of the American Council on Education closed the meeting with a comprehensive—if uncritical—view of the present attitudes toward teacher training in graduate departments throughout the nation.

At the close of the meeting I felt that the talks had been not dreary or futile, but challenging. They revealed not only the discouraging fact that employers of English teachers often had little use for the kind of training offered in the graduate school, but also the highly encouraging fact that the graduate schools were both dissatisfied with their program and anxious to do something about it. I felt, however, that there was another viewpoint to be heard from: that of the young instructor who has stepped out of the disciplines of graduate study into the disciplines of teaching. I propose to represent this viewpoint as well as I can. My experience has been, I believe, typical. As an undergraduate who majored in English I found pieces of literature interesting and exciting. Because I wanted to develop my interests and intensify my excitements, I went on to graduate school. There I was suddenly confronted with a new approach to literature, an approach which may be called the factual, the scholarly, or the

historical—a distinct departure from the aesthetic or critical approach of undergraduate reading. This brand of literary study was infinitely more severe than any I had known, but I soon found that it awakened interests and provided excitements which, although utterly unprecedented, were quite irresistible; and I looked upon my undergraduate studies as puerile and flighty. It was at this stage, when my worship of factual erudition was at its peak, that my fellow-graduate students and I most frequently used the phrase “the teacher with an undergraduate mind” in the contemptuous manner which I shall describe in a moment.

But when I abruptly stepped out of graduate study into undergraduate teaching, I immediately found that the brand of excitement which I had cultivated in graduate school left freshmen and sophomores cold. I had to revise my state of mind too quickly for comfort; and when I at last hit upon a method of teaching which I considered partially successful, I discovered that I had in large measure returned to the way of examining novels and plays and poems which I had not seriously practiced since my senior year. And I saw very clearly that my graduate studies had not been primarily designed to condition me for my specific role in society, that of an educator.

In the light of this experience I should like to outline, in dogmatic style, what I consider the fundamental achievements as well as the more obvious shortcomings of graduate study as preparation for teaching. Before presenting this outline, however, I feel obliged to present briefly the three assumptions implicit in this paper.

First, graduate study is, and must be, a training for the job of teaching. It is a

commonplace that in college teaching a man cannot get anywhere without a Ph.D. And it is obvious that his work for the Ph.D. represents the only time he will ever spend getting ready for the special profession he will enter.

My second assumption is that the teaching of beginning courses in English is both the most important and—so my elders inform me—the most taxing job in any English curriculum. I do not look upon these courses as necessary evils which the young instructor must tolerate until he can publish his way up to the privilege of lecturing, either as assistant professor, to the minority of college students who go on to the advanced courses, or, as full professor, to the fraction of this minority who go on to do graduate work. Among every twenty-five students who fall under our guidance in beginning courses there are only one or two who go on to major in English. Our obligation to the twenty-three who will never face us again is the supreme responsibility of our teaching staff.

My third assumption is that our job in these introductory courses is not to teach the history of literature. Our job is first of all a coaching job: we must develop in our students a skill—a skill for reading prose fiction, poetry, and drama in such a way as to realize the potentialities of these forms and to exhaust any given piece of writing of its total meaning. We must also organize and direct the critical powers of our students so that after they leave us they will continue to refine their critical discrimination and to intellectualize their taste. Our first job is not to send our students away with more information about the history of English literature, but to send them away as more accurate and appreciative readers whose critical taste will continue to develop whether they return to us or not.

With these three assumptions in mind, let us turn to the specific achievements and shortcomings of the typical graduate program as a preparation for teaching. First, its achievements:

1. A graduate student invariably becomes keenly interested in history and historical research.

2. A graduate student normally develops a sincere respect for factual accuracy, the honest use of evidence, and expert manipulation of logic.

3. A graduate student learns to work hard and long.

All three of these achievements are eminently useful to the beginning teacher. The first two impressively mature his mind and prevent him from ever publishing disorderly, incomplete, or illogical articles. And the third guarantees that his degree will be a splendid character reference. But as training for the profession of teaching, the graduate program also has four distinct shortcomings:

First, it fails to provide sufficient drill in the sheer reading, explaining, and evaluating of poems, plays, short stories, etc. In other words, it places so much emphasis on the historical significance of writing that its aesthetic or philosophical importance—the kind of importance which comes first in most undergraduate teaching—is slighted. For example, many of us who are typical products of the typical graduate program are far more capable—even more anxious—to teach Tennyson's *Ulysses* as a nineteenth-century document than we are to teach it as a poem.

Second, the graduate program fails to investigate and test such intangible faculties as taste and imagination. To be sure, these faculties can neither be measured nor be developed as easily and with such assurance as a student's

memory for facts, but they are quite as important for successful teaching. The young instructor is frequently called upon to take charge of a course in creative writing; indeed, all teachers of English should be able both to encourage talented writers and to discourage those who are clearly *not* talented. This demands that the instructor be familiar with creative processes; yet the conventional graduate program reveals little interest in this familiarity.

Third, the graduate school does not consciously introduce the student to the present as well as to the past. It does not guarantee his understanding of what is going on in the intellectual world right now. He hears of the "latest" in scholarship, but not of the "latest" in other realms of thought. This may account for the intellectual lag among teachers which the easy-chair editor deplored a year ago. The scholar need know little about the present, but surely the teacher, whose job it is to condition the undergraduates for the world which they are soon to enter, should be in a position to interpret the present intelligently.

Fourth, the graduate school does not deliberately confront the student with the supreme responsibility of his profession: his responsibility as an educator. He is not challenged to explain or justify the study of literature in relation to other academic pursuits; he is not introduced to the complex problems of the English curriculum, the relation of college English to that of the secondary schools, and the special intellectual needs of seventeen-year-old adolescents. The present-day graduate student is made to feel that his first obligation is to learning. I agree that this is a real and important obligation, but not his first; as an educator, his first obligation is to his students.

These four shortcomings of typical graduate work are here presented neither in a spirit of griping which will force some to pronounce all this "dreary" nor in a spirit of pessimism which will lead others to call it "futile." I offer them as shortcomings which are already being eradicated and which I believe can and will be completely wiped out. And since I am inclined to be impatient with others who perpetually point out flaws without undertaking the less comfortable task of proposing remedies, I should like to suggest a four-point program for graduate schools, a program which might conceivably eliminate the deficiencies mentioned above.

First, the graduate school might focus its students' total attention upon individual pieces of literature by introducing a required seminar in practical criticism. I have attended two such seminars, both of great assistance in my teaching efforts. The first has taken the form of an after-dinner parlor activity. To each individual in the gathering is handed paper, pencil, and a mimeographed copy of some poem, stripped of all information about its author, century, and the like. The poem is read aloud, and all are then required to write: to write a statement of what the poem is trying to say or accomplish, an analysis of the methods used to realize this end, and a critical evaluation of the poem as a work of art. After a while, when the pencils have quieted down, each person reads aloud what he has written. There is a rule that all the statements must be read before the arguing may begin; this rule has never yet been obeyed. The controversies are usually intense: the interpretations of each poem are widely diverse; critical evaluations rarely coincide. Yet through it all the poem stands firm and unshaken; and by the time we call a halt

we know much more about the poem than we have ever suspected possible, and we realize that we have laid bare our critical limitations a good deal more than we ever intended to.

The second seminar has assumed the form of weekly meetings of those who teach the freshman literature course at Williams College. At each meeting one or more papers are presented on the reading material for the coming week. Such a paper not only offers a critical analysis of, let us say, the short story soon to be taught, but also suggests concrete methods of handling it in the classroom. These meetings have been of extreme value to me, not primarily because of new insight into the literature to be taught, but because of new insight into the limitations of the supposedly cultivated human reason. I regretfully recall my own recent experience of listening to two diametrically opposed interpretations of Henry James's *The Turn of the Screw*, each brilliantly presented, and finding myself in the perplexing state of being convinced by both. Surely, if this sort of thing were to go on in a graduate seminar, it would inculcate a certain humility in prospective teachers. Without such a seminar, the graduate school is not affording the student practice in the kind of activity which will ultimately be the most important activity in his teaching career—namely, the close, word-by-word examination and evaluation of individual poems, plays, etc.

Second, in order to acquaint graduate students with some of the mysteries of the creative process, a required seminar in creative writing might be inserted. I do not mean to imply that one need be able to produce publishable literature in order to conduct successfully either a course in creative writing or a course in literature. But I do feel that no one be-

gins to understand the principles inherent in the various literary forms until he has personally endeavored to put together—however incompetently—sonnets, lyrics, dramatic monologues, short stories, a full-length play, and possibly a novel. A seminar demanding this activity would produce, no doubt, a lot of bad literature; but the student who had been through it would surely have a more penetrating insight into the problems of artistic creation.

Third, graduate studies might well keep one eye on the present by occasionally assigning work on a contemporary novel or a contemporary volume of criticism. The conventional graduate program implies that the intellectual controversies of today are relatively trivial, that eighteenth- and nineteenth-century problems are far more vital—and vital for their own sake. Yet the instructor who struggles to prepare students for an understanding of their own world must himself understand both something of the past and something of the present. The graduate school might well expose him to the complex and gigantic task of interpreting the present. The most reasonable place for this exposure, I believe, is the seminar in theoretical criticism. This semester, for example, a seminar dealing with the history of critical theory would have done well to weigh seriously the extraordinary phenomenon of a big man in English, Professor Howard Mumford Jones, chastising American critics one week because they are not philosophers, a few weeks later because they are. As Professor Jones tangled with the editors of the *Southern Review*, the students might well have joined in the fray, using as ammunition whatever they had learned from their historical pursuits. This would have vitalized their studies, exercised

their minds in the clarification of issues, and given them a sense of personal participation in current wrangles as they helped to pry apart Professor Jones's courageous inconsistencies.

The fourth point in this suggested program pertains to the graduate student's future social responsibility as an educator. I am perpetually baffled because future educators in graduate English departments are required to take no course in education. Although once or twice I have heard more liberal professors recommend that we take work in the education department, more often I have found that directors of graduate study talk about education courses with a flippant sarcasm which is dangerously infectious. I have heard students echo this sarcasm; I have been guilty of echoing it myself. Yet I fail to comprehend why, if existing courses in education are so foolish, so puerile, so utterly useless to those of us who plan to devote our lives to education, the English department does not offer special courses of its own.

I should therefore recommend that the graduate school put first on its list of requirements a full-year course in education. The content of this study would be determined by experienced teachers. It would possibly include a period of serious discussion of the philosophy of education: What is the end of Education? How do courses in literature contribute to that end? Just what relation should literary studies bear to studies in political science, philosophy, economics, the natural sciences? What does the study of English have to do with the purposes for which we are now waging war? A teacher of English should be forced to ponder these questions, if not answer them.

Work in educational psychology would conceivably assist the young man who

must understand the mental and emotional characteristics of those to whom he is to introduce the delights and disciplines of literary study. Such work might inform the twenty-four-year-old intellectual that the seventeen-year-old adolescent who will face him in the classroom will naturally find Browning a vastly superior poet to T. S. Eliot, that indeed a worship of Browning at seventeen is somehow a necessary antecedent to worship of Eliot at twenty-four.

It might also prepare him for such curious misinterpretations of poetry as that recently made at Williams by a red-blooded, football-worshipping freshman who said that *Love among the Ruins* is a poem which tries to show that the past was far preferable to the present; for in olden times a king might sit with his minions and his dames to watch athletic contests, whereas nowadays the only excitement in life is a girl standing among some ruins, dumbly waiting for her lover.

The graduate school might also acquaint its candidates with fundamental problems in pedagogy, current developments in the required course in freshman composition, English teaching in secondary schools, etc.

These are but a few of the problems which might be attacked in the graduate course which I have suggested. They are the problems which appear most crucial to me as a beginner. If the graduate school did insert instruction in education, plus the three seminars designed, first, to develop skills in the accurate reading and mature criticism of individual pieces of literature; second, to provide an insight into the mysteries and chores of the creative process; and, third, to encourage intelligent participation in the intellectual world of the present—if the graduate school were to absorb a pro-

gram of this kind, it would impress on the student's mind that he must be a scholar, to be sure, but also that he must be a scholar primarily in order that he may be a more successful teacher.

In no way do I mean to suggest that what the graduate schools now do for their students is unimportant. Not only is the typical training in scholarship first-rate, but graduate departments are showing signs of awareness that other forms of training are also desirable. Teaching fellowships are granted which not only keep the student fed but offer him a fine opportunity to practice teaching under careful supervision. Extracurricular clubs are fostered wherein such things as the *Southern Review* and Professor Jones's utterances can be discussed. Detailed analyses and criticisms of individual poems are written and refuted in the rooms of those students who occasionally dare to take an evening off for activity so irrelevant to the Ph.D. Creative writing is often recognized as a legitimate preoccupation of graduate students, although rarely accredited as integral to the Ph.D. program. And certain bolder professors even go as far at some universities as to gather a few of the more congenial Ph.D. candidates under their wings and take them out into the world of secondary schools to see and hear exactly what is going on in the English classrooms.

But all these activities consume the candidate's precious time, postponing the wonderful day when he will receive his degree; and all are squeezed in without any basic alteration in the traditional aims or methods of graduate study. Those features of the graduate program which foster better teaching are now marginal features. I should like to see them become central.

If they were to be made central, we

should have in our midst more examples of what I call the "teacher with an undergraduate mind." As a fledgling graduate student I shared with my fellow-students a feeling of presumptuous contempt for this creature. Our view of him was grossly distorted; we looked down upon him as a poor soul who whiles away his life teaching mere freshmen and sophomores; who is apparently ignorant of—or naïvely superior to—the "scientific" historical method; who has great—and somewhat undignified—enthusiasms, but is enthusiastic about the wrong things: not about the latest scholarship published, but about individual poems or novels—even novels published this year; who very likely teaches one advanced undergraduate course—that in the Romantic period; and who, it is suspected, reads for private intellectual stimulation the works of such watery minds as Charles Lamb and Robert Louis Stevenson.

But as one who has switched from graduate study to undergraduate teaching, I have violently revised both my attitude toward and my conception of this poor creature. To be sure, he may not get ahead in the profession by writing scores of articles which his students will never read for periodicals his students will never hear of. Yet this does not mean that he is not interested in recent scholarship; rather he is acute enough to divide what he does read into that which is interesting for its own sake and that which will be useful in his teaching; and he possesses the will-power to refrain from mentioning the former in class. He is wise enough to know that the Romantic period makes an appeal to the youthful heart and mind as no other

period can; and that in order to teach it successfully, one must wilfully bridge the gap between one's own maturity and the student's adolescence, a gap which is one long year wider every September. He has been guilty of writing a few sonnets over the years—perhaps even of writing a novel which some publisher rejected. He knows *Kubla Khan* by heart without ever having consciously memorized it; he gets a kick out of the twenty-third reading of *Pride and Prejudice*; he can make *Hamlet* vibrate as a play without mentioning the intriguing story of its genesis; he can develop in students a capacity both for picking up a story in a New Directions publication to read with intense critical curiosity and for picking up a story in a Bernarr MacFadden publication to toss aside quickly. Such a teacher is doing his job well. He may have an undergraduate mind; but certainly that is preferable to the obvious alternative—a graduate-school mind. Yet if the graduate school in time revises its aims so as to train teachers as well as scholars, the terms "undergraduate" and "graduate" will not suggest—as they have in the past—minds with opposing interests. The rewards of scholarship are great. But we must not forget that there would be few literary scholars in existence, there would be few graduate schools to train more of them, there would be few undergraduates anxious to pursue their studies farther; in fact, there would be few of us in Indianapolis today if, somewhere along the line, we had not fallen under the spell of a teacher with the kind of mentality which convinces a courageous devotion to his profession, the teacher with an undergraduate mind.

THE NEW PROGRAM FOR THE A.M. DEGREE IN ENGLISH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

DAVID DAICHES¹

Now that the University of Chicago has decided to award the A.B. degree on the completion of "general education," the degree of Master of Arts at this institution takes on a new importance. The A.M. has now, in fact, a clearly definable rationale, distinguishing it from both the A.B. and the Ph.D. in a manner that brings some long desiderated reason and order into the hierarchy of degrees. Indeed, whatever points may be adduced for or against the new conception of the A.B. (though it is the execution rather than the conception that is new), it must be conceded that it means a great opportunity for the A.M.—an opportunity to make this degree a full and well-rounded training in a series of related disciplines and subject matters which together constitute a "special field." Thus the A.B. becomes a general groundwork for any future special study; the A.M., building on that groundwork, provides a thorough training in the theory and practice of some special branch of intellectual activity; the Ph.D., utilizing the techniques acquired in the training for the A.M. and developing them to a much greater degree, leads to an individual original contribution to an understanding of some subject within this field. Each degree, while complete in itself, has its logical relation to what comes before

and after, and the Master's degree in particular, which occupies the central position in the trilogy, can be seen either as the means of pursuing the study of a subject or a group of related subjects beyond the period of general education for broadly cultural purposes, or as the preparation for a teaching or other professional career, or as a transitional step for those intending to proceed to advanced graduate study and research. The Master's degree in English is designed with all three points in mind.

This being the theory of the A.M. degree, what course of study should it require of the student? What kind of training can be fairly said to give the student a proper familiarity with the field of English studies? The answer to this question depends not only on what we conceive the function of the Master's degree to be but also on what we conceive to be the nature of "English" as a study. Is it a body of knowledge? Is it a set of principles, skills, or techniques? What is the relation, in this field, between information and understanding? Is the student to be provided with a set of facts, a set of opinions, a set of tools, or a collection of other peoples' insights—or with some or all of these? Is he to be encouraged primarily to read individual texts—poems, novels, plays, essays, histories, etc.—or to memorize histories of literature? And what is the function of the instructor of such students? Is he primarily a middleman, purveying the opinions of the great critics and facts collected by others? Is

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he a timesaver, condensing into convenient formulas whole sets of historical or critical works? Is his chief function to convey information or enthusiasm? The aims of the traditional English teacher represent a not very happy combination of all these. But the duty both of the student and of the instructor can be understood only after the formulation of some clear ideas concerning the nature and purpose of literary study. The University of Chicago, in its requirements for the Master's degree in English, is presupposing some such formulation. I shall try to make explicit what that formulation seems to be and what its relation is to the program for the degree.

The first and perhaps the most important requirement of any student who wishes to work for a degree in English should be a background of wide and varied reading. For, whatever critical insights instruction may be able to give to the student, no real appreciation and evaluation of literature is possible without experience of literature, that breadth of reading which lets the reader see the varieties and potentialities of his subject and helps to develop some personal taste and judgment without which no critical method can be fruitful. A natural curiosity about literature is something a university English department ought to expect every student to possess before he comes there. That curiosity can be encouraged, but hardly created, by proper direction on the part of instructors. It is not something that can be acquired by reading histories of literature, compilations which list the dates, works, and characteristics of authors in chronological order. Literary history is a subject of great importance, but it can never take the place of the reading of original works.

A literary history is generally either a work of reference or else a personal inter-

pretation of facts selected out of a great and complex mass. Both aspects of literary history are valuable, but it is important to understand the kind of value they possess. Literary history in the sense of works of reference about authors and periods arranged in chronological order is indispensable to the student at every stage in his literary studies. He must learn how to use such works of reference, to understand them for what they are, to know where they are available and what is to be got out of them. The second kind of literary history—individual interpretation of a series of related or apparently related texts or authors—is also valuable, but this kind can be of real use only to the student who has done some reading for himself first. To memorize historical interpretations of texts one has not read might be useful in passing certain types of examination but is hardly education in literature.

There is no such thing as *the* history of any literature; there are simply histories—varying interpretations and patterns of works and their backgrounds—which have greater or less merit in accordance with the degree of the author's insight and ability to correlate facts. No education in literature is complete before more than one of such histories has been read. But their reading is the culmination, not the starting-point, of an education. The starting-point must always be the reading of original works—the careful and intense reading of a limited number, set against the continual, less intense, reading of an ever increasing number. Hence a program for a degree in English should not start with a cut-and-dried “survey” of English literature but with the reading of texts. Yet at every point the student should be encouraged to use literary histories as works of reference, going from his reading of an author

to an account of that author in a history so as to get the historical perspective right and to find any information about the "intellectual climate" of the period that will help to increase his understanding. But he goes from the original text to the history, not in the opposite direction. Further, tentative steps toward integration should be made at every stage in the student's career, and the reading of histories and attendance at survey courses are, of course, very important in helping the student to make such steps; but, again, they are always helps to the interpretation of what has been or is being read rather than substitutes for original reading. Histories and surveys therefore play an important part in the study of literature, but not an initial one.

In accordance with this principle, the A.M. degree in English at the University of Chicago provides in the first year of its three-year program that the student should acquire a general knowledge of English and American literature *as specified by a published list of works*. This is to make sure that the student has reached a proper jumping-off point for literary study: he must have some experience of the reading of important works of literature. At the end of his first year his knowledge of these works will be tested by a simple content examination: he has to prove that he has read these works, and he has to know, too, their authorship and chronology (the only kind of literary history for which he is ready at this stage). No invidious separation is made between British and American literature.

While the student is reading these works, he is provided with training in the reading of texts; i.e., he takes courses in practical criticism and in the analysis of ideas, which are not necessarily courses planned as such but courses in particular

authors or groups of authors. Here the student learns how to handle critical and analytical problems, paying less attention at this stage to the differences between one period and another than to the basic techniques and arts that may be common to many periods. He may choose from a great variety of courses—"eighteenth-century comedy," "Thackeray and Dickens," "Shakespeare," "Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne," "Burke, Gibbon, and Hume," are some examples—and there is, in addition, a course in practical criticism whose function is to teach critical method solely, by giving the student practice on particular texts. Thus in his first year the student is doing reading on his own and at the same time learning techniques of criticism and analysis through their application to the works of individual authors. The student here is free to choose among various courses given by various instructors whose methods will, of course, differ. The main thing is that he will learn, through practice, some intelligent methods of analyzing and criticizing works of literary art and of analyzing arguments rhetorical, philosophical, and historical. In addition, the student in his first year will be encouraged constantly to make a proper use of works of reference.

The examinations appropriate to these courses, along with those given at the end of the second year, may be regarded as constituting a qualifying examination admitting to candidacy for the degree. Of the two parts of the qualifying examination, the first must be passed at least two quarters before the second is attempted.

By the beginning of the second year²

² Students who enter the Department at the end of the first or second year of this program will be treated as transfer students and, so far as is practicable, will be excused from such parts of the Departmental requirements as, in the judgment of the

the student is expected to have sufficient background of reading so that literary history will begin to mean something to him. In this year, therefore, he is introduced to a historical view of English and American literature to which is related reading supplementary to the list for the first-year examination. The lectures in this course will presuppose the first-year reading list. Proficiency will be tested by course examinations.

Literary study includes both a body of knowledge and a number of skills and techniques (methods of reading, criticizing, analyzing, evaluating), and accordingly as the student progresses in his knowledge of works of literature he must be provided with the means of becoming more competent in handling such works. In his second year, therefore, he is given further training in literary criticism and in the analysis of ideas through courses both in criticism as such (in which the principles and methods of the great critics of the past will be discussed and illuminated) and in particular authors or groups of authors or works, in which instructor and student together will practice various methods of criticism and analysis. Here again the student will have a choice among a variety of courses (such as "English verse satire," "Bacon, Browne, and Hobbes," "Swift," "Browning," "Mark Twain") and will become familiar with more than one approach. Critical competence at this stage will be tested by an examination not on any of the works studied in courses but on a fairly short list of texts, which will remain constant: in this examination the student will have to demonstrate his competence in answering critical and

analytical questions on these texts—he will have the chance to apply the techniques and skills he should by this time have developed.

In his third year the student will proceed to the intensive study of authors or limited groups of works and will be provided not only with further training in criticism and analysis but also with an introduction to historical and analytical grammar and to literary historiography. Out of the various courses offered, the student will take courses in Shakespeare and in Chaucer together with three other courses in authors or groups of authors or historical topics. The final examination will thus include examinations on Chaucer and Shakespeare and in these three selected topics, and, in addition, an examination in analytical grammar, an examination in literary historiography (this requirement to be satisfied by passing the course examination in the historiography course), and examinations on two texts chosen and set each year by the Department for the purpose of testing the student's skill in literary criticism and in the analysis of ideas. This last examination has been given by the Department for some years, and here are the texts that have been chosen: For the examination in the analysis of ideas: Emerson's *Representative Men*, Berkeley's *Three Dialogues*, More's *Utopia*, Henry George's *Progress and Poverty*, John Stuart Mill's *Representative Government*, Newman's *Apologia*, Mill's *On Liberty*, Sir Thomas Browne's *Hydriotaphia*. For the examination in criticism: Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, Ben Jonson's *Volpone*, Scott's *Heart of Midlothian*, Shakespeare's *Coriolanus*, Chaucer's *Merchant's Tale*, Fanny Burney's *Evelina*, Keats's *Poems*, of 1820, Max Beerbohm's *Zuleika Dobson*.

A word must be said on the last two of

Department, have been adequately satisfied elsewhere, in order that they may be able to complete their preparation for the final examinations without appreciable loss of time.

these requirements (historiography and the two set texts). A possible objection to this program might be that, with so many optional courses in single authors or groups of related works, the student may come to the end of his program with great gaps in his knowledge and with little if any historical perspective. This is, indeed, a danger, and it has been recognized. How is it to be avoided? To require the student to remember a list of facts, dates, and authors' attributes is not going to help him much: this may give him a parrot-like kind of knowledge of the things he has left out of his own reading, but no real understanding. Yet he ought to know something about those authors he has not had time to read—how they have been approached, how they relate to what he has read himself, and so on. A course in historiography, by requiring the student to read and discuss literary histories from the point of view of method, will provide him with such knowledge incidentally, as it were, while serving at the same time a far more important function: it will let the student understand that there is no such thing as *the* literary history of England or America but a variety of ways of dealing historically with the material. He will learn to scrutinize and evaluate the different methods of literary historians and at the same time he will see how authors, when treated in different ways, emerge differently. He will thus learn literary history while knowing it for what it is; he will not fall into the error of the student in the conventional survey course who is liable to conceive of literary history as a series of concrete facts and judgments which have only one possible arrangement. The study of literary history at this stage will contribute a great deal to the student's intellectual maturity, will give him an insight into the

problems of historical interpretation and arrangement, will enable him to relate literature to its cultural background, and will also fill up a lot of gaps in his information. Such a course will naturally come at the end of the student's program, when he is familiar with at least some of the material with which literary history deals. In such a program history becomes the coping stone rather than the foundation, and the student is not required to learn by rote lists of attributes of authors who are nothing but names to him.

The examination on the two set texts constitutes the final examination proper for the degree and is designed to test the student's ability to apply independently, to texts of some length not treated in his courses, the various disciplines involved in literary study, especially criticism, the analysis of ideas, grammar, and historiography. The texts for the examination include an imaginative work (e.g., a drama, a novel, or a collection of lyric poems) and either a rhetorical or intellectual work or a history (see the examples already cited). The texts are announced at least one quarter before the examination, and the questions set regularly include problems in criticism and interpretation, in grammar, and in literary history. The student is allowed to bring his copies of the texts and notes that he has himself previously prepared. Various courses, open to the student in his third year, will help him to acquire the training necessary for this examination.

Such an examination is based on the view that the ultimate end of a degree in English is the equipment of the student for the independent appraisal, analysis, and enjoyment of works of literature. The testing of that equipment is the final stage in his preparation. The ca-

capacity for independent work is also tested by the additional requirement that the student should either secure a satisfactory grade on each of three term papers written under three different instructors in courses on an advanced level or write a satisfactory extended thesis or essay on a problem approved by the Department.

Nothing has been said here about entrance requirements or electives, for the purpose of this essay is simply to explain the theory and practice of English studies reflected in the kind of English courses that make up the program for the A.M. degree in English at the University of Chicago. The Department has arranged the program so as to meet the requirements of general students, teachers, and future researchers. The intensive training in reading and interpreting texts is regarded as equally valuable for the teaching of literature and as preparation for research, as well as providing indispensable equipment for anyone who wishes to read literary, philosophical, or historical texts with discrimination.

The program is not an easy one, and it leaves a great deal to the initiative of the individual student. Some important subjects—such as the relation of literary history to the history of culture in general—are treated only by implication, and the student must follow up with his own reading the hints and suggestions thrown out in class. Above all, the program is designed for students who possess real intellectual curiosity and a genuine enthusiasm for literature. An English department which takes the study of literature seriously cannot be content with providing its students simply with information plus techniques of criticism. There must be, in the department's whole arrangement of the program, a consciousness of the seriousness and importance of literary study, an awareness

that it is not a subject merely for the dilettante and the tea-table conversationalist but a study which requires both the careful training of the scholar and the intellectual responsibility of the philosopher. Works of literature constitute perhaps the most impressive monuments which a civilization produces; their meaning is complex and profound, capable of discussion on an endless number of levels. They are not to be approached with a giggle or an epigram. True, enjoyment is the reaction to be insisted on always, but there are many kinds of enjoyment, and the proper enjoyment of literature demands both sensitive emotions and a mature and responsive intellect. Literature is an fascinating and difficult study; its students must acquire both full information and sound mental habits, both knowledge and understanding, both awareness of the criticisms of others and ability to formulate their own, both memory and discrimination, both enthusiasm and sobriety. We are long past the time when the study of literature is regarded as a "soft option" for the weaker brethren. A proper sense of the responsibility—nay, the temerity—of every student of literature ought to pervade the teaching of the English department of every university which takes its duties seriously. It is this sense which has inspired the Chicago program and which, it is hoped, goes far to atone for such deficiencies as are bound to be discovered in it. That it is capable of serious abuse, no one will deny, for all such programs are; but, while the abuses of other plans tend to produce secondhand illiteracy masquerading as understanding, the abuse of this program would probably result in a pretentious pedantry of mind. Even so, it is better to be a pedant with delusions of grandeur than a parrot that does not even know it is a bird.

PARAPHRASING AND ALLIED ACTIVITIES

CLYDE W. PARK¹

In reminiscences covering more than three decades of teaching English composition, I look back upon the assignments involving translation, paraphrasing, and related activities as among the most interesting and fruitful I have known. Such tasks are bound to be stimulating. Each exercise constitutes a definite problem for which the student may work out his particular solution—an ill-favored thing, perhaps, but his own. Of course, a perfect answer is not expected; and in some cases, as in the translation of poetry, it is hardly attainable. However, the student can at least work *toward* a satisfactory solution. He has the pleasure of trying; and in achieving results, however short of perfection, he has a definite sense of progress. His enjoyment of the exercise is enhanced by rivalry with other members of the class, who are working on the same problem. Reciprocal criticism is the more profitable because everyone in the class has experienced the same difficulties.

Some classes that I recall were concerned first with translation. We began with the foreign-language version, if the vocabulary was fairly easy to understand. If the original was too formidable, we started with a crude but accurate literal translation, which the students were asked to revise, making certain improvements upon which we all agreed. In our discussion of the broader question of standards for translation we considered a number of specific cases, including, for example, three parallel versions of Thé-

ophile Gautier's "L'Art," Dante Gabriel Rossetti's rendering of Villon's "Ballade of Dead Ladies," and several of Heine's lyrics which were known through familiar musical settings. An example of a problem in which elementary vocabulary and simple structure were combined with great difficulty in carrying over the total effect is a brief French poem by Léon de Montenaeken, which was a favorite with many students. Doubtless it is well known to most readers.

LA VIE

La vie est vaine.
Un peu d'amour,
Un peu de haine,
Et puis,—bon jour!

La vie est brève.
Un peu d'espoir,
Un peu de rêve,
Et puis,—bon soir!

To keep the tone, temper, and spirit of the piece, the balance and completeness of its pattern, the delicacy of its shading—all this is admittedly an ambitious task for a group of amateur translators. But, if one has the audacity, one may at least rush in and make the attempt.

Here is a frankly tentative rendering of the first stanza, an experimental version that someone ventured to propose:

How vain is life!
An hour of song,
An hour of strife,
And then,—so long!

Eagerly the critics pounced upon this offering. The first line was considered rather weak and commonplace, although the best of the four. The inversion, mak-

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ing the line end in "life," was justifiable as an anticipation of "strife," but this rhyme was seriously questioned on the score of meaning. It was suggested that "hour," if used at all, had better be saved for the second stanza, in which the idea of time was more definitely emphasized. One critic thought that "a bit of this" and "a bit of that" would be the right formula for the second and third lines, but he was not ready to be more specific. "Song" as a translation of *amour* was thought to be hopelessly far fetched, and "strife" was only a little more acceptable in the place of *haine*. The slangy quality of "so long!" was declared unpardonable. The total effect of the proposed stanza was agreed to be very far from the grace and the delicate wistfulness of the original. Since this was the first English stanza offered, the other translators had a better notion of the work that was cut out for them in turning out an improved version. The reader may wish to work toward a satisfactory translation for himself, starting from this point. He will find, as the class did, that to arrive at an acceptable English parallel for the original is a pleasantly tantalizing and somewhat baffling problem.

The principal work done by the class was paraphrasing, or English-to-English translation. This was restricted to prose. The preferred starting-point was a passage in which intrinsically interesting ideas were expressed in abstract or involved phrasing, and the problem was to convey the same thought in simpler language. We did not call it "basic" then. Of course, the student was expected, after having obtained a clear understanding of the thought, to express it in a manner most natural to him. In our discussions of the requirements to be met and of the parallel passages that had been written, we were confronted with the

general question of the relation between thought and form and the circumstances in which the two were so dependent on each other as to be virtually inseparable. The most common faults in the substitute versions were found to be oversimplification, incompleteness, and, especially, sacrifice of the shades of meaning between the lines. The last of these considerations was, of course, the most important. An exercise did not seem to be justified if it were restricted to matter-of-fact content, and if it were merely a question of displacing one prosaic statement by another that was equally prosaic, or perhaps more so. Writing that emphasized content or was done for a practical purpose could be represented better by reviewing, abstracting, and *précis* writing—all of which were taken up in another course in composition. The problem that we set for ourselves might not be so complex as the translation of poetry, but we tried to give it enough subtlety to make it a real test of the student's resourcefulness.

On the whole, the most satisfactory passages for paraphrasing were those quoted from the novels of Henry James. Here the search for suitable extracts was quickly rewarded by the discovery of brief units of text that were comparatively self-contained and were interesting and profitable for their own sake. In his penetrating analysis of a situation, his sure grasp of character, and his refined sense of the implications of social relationships, James gave his readers much to think about. And yet, whenever a student came to put down his version of the author's ideas, he was compelled to do it in his own way or, at any rate, in a form of expression very different from the original. No one else ever wrote like Henry James. The following specimen passage, with a few student paraphrases, will il-

illustrate how different the substitute versions were from the original, and from one another.

ORIGINAL PASSAGE

Her visitors, coming in often while he sat there, found a tall, lean, slightly flushed and considerably silent man, with a lounging, permanent-looking seat, who laughed out sometimes when no one had meant to be droll, and yet remained grave in the presence of those calculated witticisms and those initiated gaieties for the appreciation of which he apparently lacked the proper culture and the right acquaintances. It had to be confessed that the number of subjects on which he was without ideas was only equalled by the number of families to which he was not allied; and it might have been added more gravely still that as regards those subjects upon which he was without ideas he was also quite without professions. He had little of the small change of conversation and rarely rose to reach down one of those ready-made forms and phrases that drape, whether fresh or frayed, the hooks and pegs of the general wardrobe of talk—that repository in which alone so many persons qualify for the discipline of society, as supernumerary actors prepare, amid a like provision, for the ordeal of the footlights [*The American*, p. 242].

During the preliminary discussion of the extract, before anyone started to write his paraphrase, there were different points of view to be examined and to be reconciled or discarded. This was an informal but valuable exercise in oral English. The worst that could happen was that a careless or undiscerning student, who did not realize the need for close reading, would grieve the instructor and incense his classmates by missing the main point entirely. I remember one case, fortunately exceptional, in which the student said that the man was at a disadvantage socially because he had never learned a profession. The words, "he was also quite without professions," were interpreted to mean that the poor man had not studied law or medicine or

engineering or anything. The student would probably have drawn a moral from this observation, if his classmates had not literally shouted him down—to the satisfaction, it may be added, of the referee-instructor. Most of the class got the idea, or a part of it, as the passages quoted will show.

The sequence in which these student versions appear has no particular significance. The reader will probably have his own order of preference. He may also care to speculate on which two examples were contributed by women.

A

Here they found him, so tall and thin and awkward, doing his best to appear at ease in the presence of her friends, who came in often while he sat there. Beneath the flush of self-consciousness, he was earnestly trying to be composed, trying to enter into that picture of which he was undeniably not a part.

The conversation, drifting from one subject to another, was one into which he could not enter with that ability and assurance which seemed to come so easily to the others. They knew just when to laugh and just what to say. What was it, then, that sealed his lips and kept him from expressing his thoughts in a way that would place him on an equal footing with the rest of her associates?

B

Lounging in an easy chair was a long, lanky, somewhat flushed individual. For the most part he maintained an unbroken silence, but whether this was due to his lack of culture and inability to indulge in the small talk going on about him, or to his being bored by the incessant chattering of those who considered themselves brilliant conversationalists, one could not be sure. Occasionally he would laugh, but mostly at the wrong time. Those jokes and pleasantries which caused polite laughter by those well versed in the amenities of society were, however, beyond his comprehension. He possessed the unique faculty, totally lacking in most persons, of neglecting to talk on subjects of which he knew nothing, and seemingly, these were somewhat numerous.

C

He didn't fit, her visitors decided,—this lanky, lounging, and unusually silent man. He was unskilled in the use of the round, empty phrases that they were wont to toss out in efforts to save a sinking conversation. His family connections were seemingly none to boast about, for he did not speak of them. His unfamiliarity with the subjects they discussed might be excusable, but not his lack of cleverness in failing to hide his woeful ignorance behind the safe generalities that came so easily to persons of their culture and acquaintance. He was even observed to laugh in the midst of serious and weighty observations in which no humor was intended. But strangely, the stock witticisms and gay sallies which had so long delighted their select circle failed to bring a ripple of amusement to his slightly flushed countenance. Clearly, he did not belong.

D

What a strange young man—silent, awkward!

Yes, that, he felt, must be the way her guests found him.

But how should he have known that he should have looked grave when the vivacious woman on the other side of the room made that odd remark, or that he should have laughed when that stout man commented on the latest something or other.

Oh for the poise to raise his tall, lean, slightly flushed self out of his permanent-looking seat and mingle gracefully among them, dropping a clever phrase here, an intelligent comment there.

Impossible! He was uncultured, uneasy, alone.

An incidental motive of the instructor, it may as well be confessed, was to "sell" Henry James to student readers. An acquired taste, but a taste well worth acquiring, James was appreciated more fully by those who had analyzed particular passages from his writings and had noted how rich in meaning his involved expressions really are. Both *The American* and *The Ambassadors* were frequently read by students as a result of the paraphrase introduction to Henry James.

As a study in comparative modes of

expression, the writing of parodies was always suggested by students. In general, such writing was discouraged. Some consideration of the subject seemed worth while, if only to bring out the difficulty of doing this sort of thing well. Because of this difficulty parodies are often cheap and superficial—an imitation of some obvious features of the pattern or some conspicuous verbal mannerisms of the original. One example that was brought forward for discussion was found to be weak, even in these respects. It was a so-called "parody" of some well-known lines from Tennyson. Referring to the mid-year examinations, a young woman had written some verse and had published it in a college magazine, with "apologies to Tennyson." Her opening line was

Cram, cram, cram, till my head is
ready to burst!

Although there is a certain metrical similarity to the corresponding line in Tennyson's poem, we had no trouble in deciding that the resemblance was superficial and the difference fundamental. The unmusical short *a*'s, for example, contrasted sharply with Tennyson's melodious long vowels, which give stateliness of movement to the first part of his line. The short vowels might be appropriate to suggest a pre-examination mood of irritation, but the effect was certainly not Tennysonian. The difference was even greater in the second part of the line, where Tennyson uses the repetition and spacing of long *o* to form a literal melody, in Stevenson's sense of the term. These were some of the reasons why the writer should have apologized more abjectly to the author of

Break, break, break, on thy cold
gray stones, O sea!

As some members of the class pointed out, a more appropriate reference would

have been to Thomas Hood, since the parody came closer to the "Song of the Shirt." In contrast with such attempts we considered a few outstanding parodies, products of genius and not facile improvisations of amateurs. Of the great parodies which set the standard, we liked especially J. K. Stephen's Wordsworthian sonnet on Wordsworth's own "Two Voices" and the clever "W. W. Americanus," which begins with the Whitmanesque line,

The clear, cool note of the cuckoo, which has ousted the legitimate nest-holder.

One other variety of comparative phrasing should be mentioned, if only briefly. It was inevitable that we should share with practically all other classes in composition the approach to writing that is recommended by Robert Louis Stevenson in his *Memories and Portraits*. In this case the writer's purpose in adopting the style of someone else was serious imitation rather than parody. Students were invited to test Stevenson's "sedulous-ape" theory by following the example of some author whom they cared to impersonate for the moment. It was a good-enough "limbering-up" exercise, even though the results, as a whole, were something less than wonderful. The "Macaulay paragraphs," for example, did not often get beyond a following of Macaulay's structural pattern. Of course, if they did that, they accomplished something. A more complete identification of the student with his model's point of view and method of thinking is probably too much to expect of a brief exercise. I have known it to result from a semester course in Edmund Burke. The one product of the "imitation" assignment that stands out most clearly in my recollection is a brief essay

that was modeled upon Stevenson himself. Part of the opening paragraph is quoted below.

A BIT OF PROSE IN STEVENSON'S MANNER

Next to dying for one's faith I can think of no more ecstatic joy than the hourly life of the doctrinaire. To have the system of the universe on your cuff; to know, rather than to believe; to overlook any truth that will not fit your theory; to turn a deaf ear to the man who intelligently disagrees; then, best of all, to sun in the approval of the devoted—I ask you, is this not to have taken happiness by the scruff and to have bound her fast?

This little essay, when published in the college literary magazine, was signed with the initials, "G. E." They stand for Gustav Eckstein, whose name will recall to many readers such fine and unusual works as *Canary*, *Kettle*, *Lives*, *Hoku Sai*, and *Noguchi*. Eckstein was the most brilliant and by far the most original student I ever had. Even at this early stage he showed much of the individual outlook and independent thinking which have characterized his mature writing. He wrote, experimentally, in the style of Stevenson, Ambrose Bierce, and many others; but his own ideas demanded and found their special idiom. He has since attested the helpfulness of the various practice exercises, in which, it should be emphasized, the instructor's function was one of encouragement rather than teaching. An undeserved, but none the less appreciated, reward of the sort that any former instructor would find gratifying is the following inscription which Eckstein wrote in a presentation copy of one of his books: "Accept this—put it somewhere on a shelf. I have said it before, but you did me a real good back there when I first tried to write."

ROUND TABLE

ENGLISH-SPEECH: UNION NOW

One of the many sacrosanct absurdities hampering the progress of undergraduate collegiate education in the United States is the imaginary partition line drawn at the freshman level between what is called "speech" (i.e., spoken English, with perhaps some appreciation of Daniel Webster) and what is called "English" (i.e., written English, with perhaps some appreciation of Ralph Waldo Emerson). We have endured this artificial distinction between *leptinotarsa decemlineata* and the potato beetle until many of us are convinced subconsciously that when light was set off from darkness, and land from water, some divine ordinance provided that Freshman Composition and Elementary Speech should remain in perpetuity reciprocally antipathetic. We accept the division as we take for granted the superior fertility of the land on our side of a state line stretching arbitrarily across the prairie.

Hence all over the nation we have seen the development of two separate and almost invariably hostile departments, each demanding of its members highly specialized training, each deprecatory of the highly specialized training demanded by its rival, each embracing a hierarchy dominated by that sacred cow, the department head, each insisting on increased departmental requirements for graduation, each proselytizing for its advanced courses at the expense of its rival, each seeking to "raise standards" (i.e., to increase the number of graduate courses—having no special connection with the work to be taught—which must be taken by the teacher of undergraduates), each striving for increased personnel and larger appropriations (ah, here we have something fundamental!), and each insisting that for the practical purposes of life the rival group's stress on teeth-point-lips or the re-

tained object after a passive verb is the essence of negation. And the feud is pursued with all the bitterness of an athlete trying to avoid required physical training.

The fact is, of course, that at the freshman level there is, or should be, very little, if any, distinction between "English" and "speech."¹ The students themselves dimly realize this profound truth and frequently ask a so-called English teacher how to pronounce *indictment*, or a so-called speech teacher whether one and one *make* or *makes* two. Let us imagine elementary French so divided: here we have a department fully competent to sound the medial *r* in *Chartres* but entirely ignorant of which way the accents slant in *élève*; here we can secure the full etymology of *oui*, but are stumped by the pronunciation of *Laon* and *Ypres*. If this picture seems exaggerated, let us remember the difficulties which arise each year from the contrasted departmental meanings given to such terms as *diction* and *emphasis*, the impossibility of explaining the pronunciation of *bury* without some training in literary history, the widespread belief that verse differs from prose chiefly in the visual effect of the lines on a printed page, and the admirable unanimity with which one speech department insisted that the word—they defined it with scientific accuracy—was *lar-*

¹ Although this paper is concerned only with the artificial separation of English and speech at the freshman level, the question may justifiably be raised as to what shall be done administratively with advanced courses, where the divergence is admittedly greater. Actually, the most highly specialized courses in English and speech are nearer together than some of the subjects traditionally grouped in the average department of education. And, as suggested in the final paragraph, courses within the bounds of English or of speech differ so materially among themselves that the administrative difficulties would be increased comparatively little by the union.

nix (to rhyme with *barn hicks*) while the superior English group corrected the pronunciation—and explained that it was a “dingus in the back of the throat.” Even in elementary remedial courses the lines of specialization break down: we have only to note how frequently faulty orthography is the result of blurred enunciation, how often ineffective delivery is due to inaccurate interpretation of the printed word. Only a few weeks ago I heard a teacher explain seriously that the metathesis of *axian* into *ask* was due to an interchange of the letters (*sic!*) *k* and *s*.

The textbooks tend to confirm the essential unity of the elementary work in speech and English. At a moderate estimate, at least 60 per cent of the material found in the average recently published speech text overlaps with similar chapters in freshman composition books. And in individual cases—where the speech texts deal with phonetics, and bring in some spelling to illustrate historical pronunciation, or where the English texts deal with argumentation—the percentage is much higher. In fact, aside from a chapter or two on the term paper and two or three chapters on voice development and delivery, the differences are no greater than those between one speech or English text and another intended for the same course. The approach, however, is conditioned by the artificial cleavage between the departments.

The whole point of this article is that vested interests, professional rivalries, and what may be called the “closed-shop spirit” are rapidly institutionalizing an illogical division. Specializing in speech should no more set off an instructor from the English group than giving the same emphasis to Elizabethan drama as distinct from Middle English phonetics. Similarly, specializing in English should no more set off an instructor from the speech group than giving the same emphasis to play production as distinct from forensics. Courses and textbooks should be combined, with the overlapping material presented but once. And no one should be permitted to offer this combined course who

was not fully competent to teach both freshman composition and elementary speech.

H. F. WATSON

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A LITERARY PHILOSOPHY FOR 1942

In *The Great Tradition*, Granville Hicks's survey of American literature since the Civil War, one finds a sharply focused image of the major literary controversy of our day: how contemporary must contemporary writing be?

Mr. Hicks, of course, has taken his stand among those who insist that contemporary literature must be very contemporary indeed. The treatment which he accords to Robert Frost, a poet who has taken an equally prominent and consistent stand with those who disclaim any particular obligation to be contemporary, is about what we should expect. In his book Mr. Hicks maintains that New Hampshire is not typical of the United States and that Mr. Frost has disregarded even some facets of New Hampshire, such as the growth of factory towns and the influence of railroads in local politics. According to Mr. Hicks, Mr. Frost has thereby identified himself with a “moribund tradition” and has tended to write of farmers as romantic figures rather than as victims of cruel economic forces. Mr. Hicks concludes: “His strong narratives, his clear and unpretentious lyrics, and his thoughtful, sensible allegories are more satisfying than most poetry of our day. But, to the extent that his imagination concerns itself only with what is personally congenial and poetically available, he too leaves us discontented.”¹

And what is the nub of Mr. Hicks's complaint against Mr. Frost? It reduces itself to the basic charge that Mr. Frost “has achieved unity by a definite process of ex-

¹ Granville Hicks, *The Great Tradition* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1935), pp. 245-46.

clusion." Of course he has. And so, needless to say, has Mr. Hicks.

Mr. Frost, in common with many of the rural New Englanders with whom he has chosen to associate himself, possesses a strong tactual sense of present realities. He approaches the problem of human relationships via the handling of a hayfork ("The Tuft of Flowers"), the handling of stones ("Mending Wall"), the handling of a hoe ("A Time To Talk"), or the handling of potatoes ("Build Soil"). To him any talk of the future which approaches human relationships by way of predetermined intellectual concepts seems loose, utopian, and lacking in reality. He sees the conflicts among these futuristic theories as a mere battle of words, and refuses to be drawn into judging "who is a contemporary liar."²

On the other hand, Mr. Hicks, in common with the social thinkers with whom he has chosen to ally himself, envisages all too plainly the brutalizing effects of our competitive economic and social order and hails the advent of a more socialized system. He feels that human relationships in a more co-operative future will have to be different in important respects than they are or have been in the individualistic present and past. To him any preoccupation with or glorification of present realities represents an attempt to hinder this desirable social trend, or at best a complacent fiddling while Rome burns.

It should be noted that Mr. Frost's response has been no better natured than Mr. Hicks's attack. While not, of course, a direct reply to pressure from Mr. Hicks's quarter, *A Further Range* nevertheless sounded in spots a grudging, querulous note hitherto unheard in Mr. Frost's poetry.

So are the battle lines drawn, each side seeking to exclude the principles and criteria on which the other side rests its case. Mr. Hicks and his cohorts insist that every artist must concern himself with "who is a contemporary liar"; Mr. Frost and his allies assert, almost categorically, that no man

who so concerns himself is worthy of the name of artist.

The plain fact is this: some artists do, and some artists don't. From where this reviewer of the human spectacle sits, it looks very much as though the process of exclusion, or the process of selection, were an integral and inescapable part of the process of living. Everyone, including the artist, selects out of the clamoring stimuli around him those to which he will react. No one can conceivably react to all of them. (This has been the fallacy of the school of thought that has demanded that every contemporary artist prove himself "truly American" by reflecting in his work the "entire panorama of American life.") And this has always been the case. Living, no less than producing a work of art, has always involved the selection of those stimuli and those responses which give the individual "psychic satisfaction." One's psychic satisfactions change, of course, with one's purposes at the moment, one's moods, and the weather. But they may be said roughly to group themselves at any given moment nearer to one of two poles: the pole of thinking or the pole of working—the pole of using one's head or the pole of using one's hands. To preserve their balance and their sanity, men need to engage by turns in activities of both these kinds.

However, intellectuals like Mr. Hicks, finding their chief satisfactions in the contemplation of the co-operative future, have tended to discount entirely the value of the tactual orientation to the present and the past of men like Mr. Frost. And the "practical men," among whom Mr. Frost is to be numbered, have tended to distrust the forward views of the intellectuals as impractical schemes calling for the abandonment of that tactual sense, and hence for an impossible and ridiculous remolding of "human nature."

Hence the literary conflict of which we are speaking. It is only the literary phase of the world political conflict.

The curious thing is that both the sensuous poets and the social theorists would ac-

² Robert Frost, *A Further Range* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1936), p. 86.

knowledge, I believe, a common goal: to help their followers make orientations productive of psychic satisfaction.

So come, come, gentlemen. Neither of you would soberly maintain that we ought to face the future without the qualities which the other represents. As he revealed in *I Like America*, Mr. Hicks knows the importance of material possessions that can be handled and worked with. Mr. Frost, as he has demonstrated in a number of poems, including "Love and a Question," "Mending Wall," and "The Lost Follower," is quite aware of the intellectual demands of a more social future. It would seem that each side has had its feelings hurt by being excluded by the other side and has retaliated in kind and with increasing irritation, completely losing sight of the great goal held in common.

Sometimes a man wants to dig in his garden, and sometimes he wants to sit and plan for a better future. His reading should enable him to bring these activities into closer relationship, instead of forcing him to choose between them. He could read both Hicks and Frost with more psychic satisfaction if both sides would only take the chips off their shoulders and relax.

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MORE ABOUT PROPAGANDA

There are still a great number of people who, at the very mention of the word "propaganda," grow suspicious or sternly disapproving. Propaganda is in the doghouse, and there is a widespread feeling that it belongs there—and nowhere else.¹

If there is a great deal of confusion and misunderstanding regarding the word "propaganda," the recent article, "What Is Propaganda?"² will scarcely provide much clarification on the subject. The author

¹ Charles J. Rolo, *Radio Goes to War* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1942), p. 269.

² By Warren Taylor in *College English*, Vol. III, No. 6 (March, 1942).

spurns the definition of propaganda which the Institute for Propaganda Analysis presented as having "so generalized a meaning that the term is more confusing than illuminating."³ Assuming that were true, one may well question the value of Mr. Taylor's definition as an intelligent guide to an understanding of propaganda:

In the current sense of the word, not the historical, there is only one kind of propaganda, and it is bad. It is a systematic scheme created by one person or a group in an effort to persuade people on insufficient grounds to believe what it wants them to believe or to act to its advantage.⁴

This definition is incomplete. The author has defined only one kind of propaganda. All propaganda is not "bad." There really is such a thing as "good" propaganda. And, although the author feels that "such a distinction . . . throws no light on the nature of propaganda and hence is not useful,"⁵ men for many centuries have recognized this distinction.

Mr. Taylor has ignored a very effective propaganda device. Propaganda may, and quite frequently does, deal with truth. The difference between American and Nazi propaganda is the difference between the Bible and *Mein Kampf*. St. Paul and Goebbels represent two propagandists with widely separated aims. Goebbels is unquestionably a "master of the art of misconstruing and lying." The truths which were spread by St. Paul still ring clear and compelling.

When one supports a drive for charity, the Red Cross, or the community chest, when one contributes to the infantile paralysis campaign or buys a Defense Bond, his support and contribution have been accelerated by a propaganda drive. To be sure "it is a systematic scheme," but hardly based on "insufficient grounds." There can be no objection to this type of propaganda. Clyde Miller has pointed out that "propaganda has been essential to regiment the traffic habits of millions. Traffic regulation is regimentation; without it there would be traffic chaos." There is such a thing as

³ *Ibid.*, p. 557.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

"good" and "bad" propaganda, and there always has been.

We recognize the fact that there is with us a kind of propaganda which "encourages fear, promotes ignorance, misguides efforts, and enfeebles common sense." It is true that there exists a vicious kind of propaganda that "withholds socially valuable information and seeks to shape public opinion for its own ends." It is indeed unfortunate that that is so. But propaganda can also serve to spread and to perpetuate the truth. And in a democracy there is such a thing as "free trade in propaganda."

A recent statement by George Creel should offer some consolation.

For all too long a time, propaganda has been associated in the public mind with lies, trickery, deceit, corruption, and the manufacture of hate. Much of it has been of that type and nature for the very obvious reason that the baser emotions are stirred far more easily and quickly than mental processes and nobilities of the spirit. It does not follow, however, that the propagandist must lie and debauch . . . the most effective and enduring results are achieved by propaganda that has its base in honor, honesty, and high idealism.⁶

American propaganda today is based on the truth. It is fostering national unity, strength, and courage by spreading the principles of democracy and Americanism. Without this propaganda, there could be no unity; and without unity, there would be no victory.

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⁶ *Saturday Review of Literature*, XXV, No. 10 (March 7, 1942), 7.

ETERNAL ERRORS

When Columbus, writing his journal in Latin as was his scholarly habit, had occasion to mention the boats of the Indians, he used the word *scapha*. Some careless scribe changed the *scapha* to *canoa*, and, as the error remained undetected, Indian boats came to be called *canoas*.

When the ubiquitous Englishman reached the Spanish Main and heard that Indian boats were called *canoas*, he said, "Ho! Canoes!" After that, he taught the word to the Indians.

Thus Columbus accidentally gave us the word "canoe" and, by a similar, peculiar comedy of errors, changed the English tortoise into a turtle.

Near to Haiti is a little island called La Tortuga by the discoverer and his men because it is shaped like a tortoise. *La tortuga* is the Spanish for tortoise.

Back in those days the English word "turtle" meant dove; and the old slowpoke that won the famous race against the hare was a tortoise.

The English translated *tortuga* as turtle; but they could see for themselves that the island in question looked like a tortoise. By that time the Britishers were so confused that they began calling tortoises "turtles."

Nowadays, except for the "voice of the turtle" in the King James Version, a tortoise is always a turtle.

And a turtle is a mourning dove.

EPSY COLLING

INKSTER, NORTH DAKOTA

CURRENT ENGLISH FORUM

ALBERT H. MARCKWARDT, J. G. PERRIN, J. B. McMILLAN

Will you give a discussion of the use of "sit," "sat," "have sat" as a transitive verb? The Dictionary gives it as a transitive verb in the usage "to cause to be seated." Would you say:

*Sit the students down in these seats;
Sit yourself down here by the window;
She sat herself down by the window;
Sit the baby in his high chair?*

C. L.

Many grammarians would call the verb in your second and third sentences intransitive and would classify the following pronoun as a "dative of interest." Such analysis is impossible, of course, in the first and fourth sentences, where *sit* is a transitive or, better, causative verb. This use of *sit* has ample sanction in usage, as evidenced by *Webster's* and the *Oxford*, especially with *down*, as in your first three examples. But most standard handbooks imply that it is not reputable when they distinguish *sit* from *set* by classing *sit* as invariably intransitive. Apparently the handbook writers, in their effort to combat certain vulgar confusions between *sit* and *set*, have oversimplified their rules. Possibly affected by the handbook condemnation, and certainly affected by the strong modern tendency to form causatives with the auxiliaries *make*, *have*, and *let*, the causative use of *sit* is usual now only in informal or colloquial usage. All but one of the sentences above are imperatives (suggesting spoken English), and the remaining one has a pleonastic *herself*, which connotes informal or conversational style.

J. B. McM.

One of the most difficult questions to answer so that a student is satisfied is whether a prepositional phrase modifies the predicate or something else in the sentence. In the following examples what do the prepositional phrases underlined modify?

1. *He showed me his face in the mirror.*
2. *The Mississippi River is a great stream in Central United States.*
3. *New Orleans is the largest city in the United States.*
4. *How many seasons are there in a year?*
5. *It certainly is dark along this road.*
6. *Both California and Florida are delightful states for the motorists.*

P. M. W.

In the first five sentences the prepositional phrases are most simply described as complements of the complete predication. Logically and historically they are complements in elliptical clauses; the first one expanded would be *He showed me his face (which was, or which appeared) in the mirror.* Thus *face* is the logical subject of a subordinate clause with the phrase as its predicate complement, and one might argue that the phrase is an adjective modifying *face*. However, it would be hard to demonstrate that the phrase modifies the noun *face* to the exclusion of the verb *showed*; the happiest solution is to say that it modifies or complements the whole predicate. The phrase in the sixth sentence is a sentence dative, subclassed as a dative of interest. Or, it may be called an adverbial sentence modifier. Such sentences as these usefully illustrate the impossibility of watertight compartments in parsing actual English syntax.

J. B. McM.

Why do we not devise or create a better salutation for use in addressing the Council and other similarly constituted groups, that is, an improvement upon the approved form "gentlemen"?

A. C. S.

There are probably many reasons, but two seem to me to be most potent. First, it is not evident that the lack of an improvement on "gentlemen" has sufficiently bothered enough people to cause them to look for one. And second, the process of establishing a new word in our language is very complex and little understood. Of the hundreds of thousands of words in English, precious few have been deliberately created by group action to fill a need, and these few are mainly trade names that gain currency when people want to sell, buy, or use the article named. Before proposing a substitute for "gentlemen" in salutations, we must remember that the salutation has practically no denotative value; it is a graphic symbol marking the beginning of the letter (in compliance with a powerful tradition). Furthermore, not all the members of the National Council want a new salutation, and not many of those who do would agree on any specific proposal. Even if the Council adopted and recommended a new form, the members who accepted it would have relatively little influence on the very large number of people who write letters and set the fashions in letter usage. Most of us would probably like such a substitute if it could be felicitously coined and painlessly established in our usage, just as we would probably like a substitute for "ain't I," but the difficulties faced by the word-coiner are simply staggering, particularly in a democratic society.

J. B. McM.

Which is the correct pronoun in these sentences?

It seems to be (she, her).

Mary's bridesmaid is to be (she, her) standing over there.

A. U.

In formal grammar the reputable form would be the nominative, "It seems to be *she*." The reasoning is that *to be* is a complement of *seems* and consequently has no subject; its complement is nominative, since the verb is the copula *to be*. (Contrast: "They seem to like *her*.") If the *to be* had a subject, it would, as the subject of an infinitive,

be an accusative, and its complement would be also: "I know the writer to be *her*." Actually many of us and probably most of us, if we ever used the construction, would say *her*, because the pronoun is in the object-position. We tend to avoid the construction in idiomatic speech and would more likely say "Mary's bridesmaid is to be *the girl* [which avoids the case question raised by a pronoun] standing over there," or even more likely "The girl standing over there will be [is going to be] Mary's bridesmaid."

P. G. P.

Mr. Henry C. Edgar writes objecting to the advice in this department of *College English* for January, 1942, not to depend upon rules for hyphenating compound words. He cites the treatment of compounds in the Preface to *Webster's New International Dictionary* and quotes sixteen rules which he himself has published in *The Conventions of Composition* (Allyn & Bacon). He insists that rules will take care of 85 per cent of the cases.

Mr. Edgar believes that sixteen rules which cover 85 per cent of the cases will fill the bill. We thus differ in our premises about what constitutes a "simple and authoritative set of rules," and such a subjective difference cannot be settled by argument. I willingly accept Mr. Edgar's statement that the sixteen rules will cover 85 per cent of the cases, but would still deny that a "simple and authoritative set of rules" can be formulated. The most trustworthy rules, such as those stated in *Webster's Collegiate*, the University of Chicago Press *Manual of Style*, or the U.S. Government Printing Office *Style Manual*, are not simple and fail to cover many common words. The only kind of authoritative rules that seems possible is an arbitrary set laid down by an editor for his proofreaders or a teacher for his students. Such a set can be enforced by mandate, but the usefulness to educators of *ipse dixit* mandates in language matters is surely discredited today.

J. B. McM.

NEWS AND NOTES

THE PERIODICALS

The immigration of scholars from Europe, the increased translation of books from foreign languages, and the good-will movement to South America are among the significant results of the world condition. In "Cross-Fertilization in Letters" (*American Scholar* for summer), B. W. Heubusch points out the necessity of taking a long-range view of the interchange of literatures and of the cultures they represent. Publishers' selections of books for translation are often superficially made. Beating tom-toms for Yankee art and letters as a method of "selling" a political system that is a misfit for peoples whose genius forbids its acceptance is a manifestation of imperfect psychology and dubious statesmanship. We must keep in mind that, although political systems may change, there is no likelihood of basic change in the cultures of different peoples. Languages persist of their own accord, and it should be our aim to preserve separate languages and to encourage the healthy nationalism that promotes the full expression of a people's genius. The scholarly men and women from Europe and their languages enlarge our intellectual vision and sharpen the tools with which we work. While Europe is without a free press, it is a meritorious ambition to publish books here in the European languages. The exiles and refugees of our day, living symbols of the pioneer spirit, revive the meaning of democratic ideals.

For two years a writing and reading laboratory had been conducted for freshmen of the lowest quartile at the Alabama State Teachers College. Describing the work of the laboratory in the March *Journal of Higher Education*, Roy P. Basler stresses the period of diagnosis, the first two weeks in the fall. The student's eye movements are pho-

tographed, his oral reading is checked, and he fills out a questionnaire calculated to uncover his general background of reading habits. On the basis of each diagnosis a remedial-reading program is prepared, with checkup tests every six weeks. Three general deficiencies mark the entire group in the laboratory: barren reading background, deficiency in vocabulary and the simple techniques of reading, and low intelligence. Free reading, with magazines and "easy" books, vocabulary exercises based on the freshmen textbooks, and the study of assignments with the help of general methods of remedial reading constitute the laboratory work in reading. Students assigned to the laboratory are more serious in their efforts, particularly in English classes, than other students in the lower half of the freshman class. By the end of the first year of the laboratory the general reading level of the laboratory students approximated the national norms for entering freshmen and surpassed the third-quartile group at Alabama. Individuals showed progress up to 23 points in the total score.

A concise survey of Australian literature by Elsie Briggs appears in the *Saturday Review of Literature* for September 5. Writing as a native Australian, the author bases her selection and interpretation of Australian writers on personal enjoyment. She begins with Charles Harpur, often considered the first of properly Australian writers, whose *Thought . . . A Series of Sonnets* was published in 1845. The romance of Australian literature, however, begins somewhat earlier with the convict-poet Michael Massey Robinson. Henry Kingsley, brother of Charles, wrote true Australian tales of the bush (notably *Geoffrey Hamlyn* and the *Hillyars and Burtons*) which have been the chief inspiration of much Australian literature. Rolf

Boldrewood is the most popular disciple of Kingsley. Mrs. Campbell Praed wrote romantic novels of politics and is still the novelist par excellence of Queensland. One of the leading novelists of the later Victorian period was Mrs. Cross, wife of a clergyman, who wrote under the name "Ada Cambridge." Adam Lindsey Gordon, who committed suicide, is considered by many to be the best Australian poet. The void which Gordon's suicide left in Australian culture has been filled by A. B. Patterson, whose book *The Man from Snowy River* has been widely read. Patterson and Gordon were born to write epics, coming from a race impressed with the dignity of their traditions and accustomed to hearing the glorious deeds of their ancestors acclaimed abroad.

Among the papers written by college students which are included in the *Vassar Journal of Undergraduate Studies*, Volume XV (May, 1942), are two on literary subjects. Mildred Hunter Brown in "The Public Character of Life in Elizabethan London" draws extensively from firsthand descriptions of the Elizabethan scene to show that the open public character of London life was the expression of a prosperous, gregarious people who delighted in spectacle. In "Thomas Wolfe: Return to Memory," Sarah Seymour discusses the weakness and the strength of the novelist who exploited his life incontinently, emphasizing the emotions more than any of his outstanding contemporaries in fiction.

The poetical plays by Eliot, Auden and Isherwood, Spender, MacNeice, and Swartz, as a group, show extraordinarily little respect for the essential conventions of the theater. In "The New *Theatrum poetarum*" (*Poetry* for July) Alan S. Downer, by analyzing representative poetic dramas, shows the disadvantage of the chorus with an audience used to naturalistic dialogue, the incoherence caused by actors stepping out of their parts and speaking directly to the audience, and the confusion resulting from multi-scened, symbolist, and vague stage settings, or "car-

penter's scenes." *Dr. Bergen's Belief*, by Delmore Schwartz, is an exception—the work of a poet whose knowledge of the theater is apparently practical. It begins with a clearly stated conflict, has a single scene, is written in dramatic verse which seldom lapses into mere poetics, and it employs no chorus, "carpenter's scenes," or addresses to the audience.

Established conventions of the stage are the result of practical experience. If the new poets wish to introduce new conventions, they should first indicate that they can manage the old.

To pay solemn attention to the nearly stillborn poetic drama of the past few years while we scorn the movies recalls the preference of the Countess of Pembroke's circle for plays like Daniel's *Cleopatra* and their contempt for the popular playwrights. Critics do not appreciate "The Elizabethan Art of Our Movies" Arthur Mizener says, in the *Kenyon Review* for spring. Although they are trained to deal with subtlety of theme and elegance of form, they lack critical machinery for isolating and evaluating the fundamental, commonplace, and rich substance, the basic ordinary reality which any popular art must express. Used to the art of those who organize personal impressions and not common experiences, we have neglected art such as the Elizabethan drama and the nineteenth-century novel.

The studios require much hack work from their writers, granted; but they have developed a complex, often brilliant, and popular art. Technical innovations have been perfected but kept from being eccentric by popular taste. In *The Informer* the varied shots which represent the betrayer's nervous tension, the furtiveness of the victim, and the political milieu emphasize the betrayer's conscience-stricken fear by means of a clock's ticking. Later, this symbol changes to the tapping of a blindman's cane and then to the dripping of water into a puddle at the informer's feet. The picture describes clearly and vividly the steps by which the informer is driven to confess what he has done,

without ever slowing down the narrative or using a device which does not function as part of the narrative. The movies, like Elizabethan plays, prove that a general audience can be at home with a pretty complicated technique, a highly artificial set of conventions, and considerable symbolic elaboration, so long as these grow naturally out of a material in the first instance commonplace.

Housman wrote in contempt of Dr. Johnson, stating that Johnson could neither write good verse himself nor recognize it when he read it. It is surprising and amusing, then, to learn from Charles Norman (*Poetry* for August) that Johnson provided such obvious models for *A Shropshire Lad* as the following, the concluding stanza of a poem recited by Johnson, on his deathbed, to Boswell:

Should the guardian friend or mother
Tell the woes of wilful waste;
Scorn their counsel, scorn their pother,—
You can hang or drown at last.

For the May *Association of American Colleges Bulletin* the subject is "Accelerated College Programs; Administrator, Professor, Student and World War II." Information on the college reserve training courses, recommendations of educational organizations (including the N.C.T.E.), and articles by educational leaders contribute to a valuable analysis of the present condition among the colleges.

English and American "Poetry between Two Wars," Warren Beck says in the *Virginia Quarterly* for summer, fermented in an artistic renaissance with revolutionary overtones, was refined by French symbolism, gained a freer and more incisive diction and a greater range of subject matter, and finally produced two fairly distinct conservatisms, the one deriving from Marx and Whitman, the other from John Donne and the French symbolists. None of the influences predominating at different times since 1912 remains broadly effective: the vers libre movement, the poetry of Pound and Eliot, or the didactic style of Auden and his school. The later

works of Yeats and Robinson suggested an almost excessive pressure of events and theories on both men. Sandburg has found no hand strong enough to take the torch he has carried so honorably. Frost becomes increasingly skeptical, resolving his talent in a diminuendo. America's most promisingly indigenous poet of the middle generation turned to the custody of books.

The present-day poet who would assume his proper role as seer and maker of persuasively beautiful songs must go beyond the sources which are associated with the confusion of modern poetry and criticism. Science characteristically stands aloof from humane speculation and leads to an intellectual escapism from comprehensive social sympathy. Under the banner of social science, poets tend to abandon the responsibility and privilege of using their own intuitive imagination in apprehending human nature's needs; and, in the Freudian school, the symbolists tend to miss the realities of human consciousness by their very preoccupation with its most fortuitously associative phases.

Poetry, if it is to be greatly useful, must discover a unity of experience in the light of humane intuitions, thereby assisting in the attainment of mental poise and wholesomeness by modern man. The true calling of the poet is the exercise of intuition, not the scientific method of psychology. By intuition may be meant acts of judgment whose logical processes are beyond the area of consciousness. Literary artists need not follow Freudian psychology, which is specialized, into the subconscious, but should remember that their main concern is the inclusive organic whole, which is greater than its components. Significant creative imagination is always a thrust upward into the highest ranges of consciousness, where association operates as well as in irrational processes, and where reason and emotion are not only reciprocal but confluent. The large and hopeful view of poetry necessitates rejecting categorical separations of feeling and thought, man and society. It means seeking out the relation of contemporary poetry to the continuous tradition of the art and the

whole mind of man. A chief service of criticism today would be a declaration that poetry does not require a choice between suggestion and definition, or aphorism and symbol. The gifted poet who saw through to a solution of the great dilemma between liberty and law could be as didactic as the prophets and still write great poetry. We need not ask that poets forego specialization, so long as they use specialization, if not in creating the most widely representative, at least without obscuring or contradicting it. The highest possible ideal of art may be that the "fragment" of experience which the poet "rescues" should imply by connection, relation, and proportion the whole of life. The future of poetry would be immense if poets, forgetting feuds, would fulfil the poet's traditional functions with a new skill, bringing to the arduous work of unifying society and harmonizing man's inner life the ancient magical aid of song.

In the mind of Faulkner, admiration and acceptance of the South operate together with disgust. He has achieved no primary and design-like conception of the South, but his ability to invest every observation with epic opulence, profligate rhetoric, and Poe-like terror has concealed the basic confusion. "Faulkner: The Rhetoric and the Agony," in the *Virginia Quarterly Review* for summer, is the title of a psychological and critical interpretation by Alfred Kazin. Faulkner's agony arises from the bitterness of a Sartoris (the southern aristocrat *manqué*) in a Snopes world (the world of the small, mean traders and ambitious poor whites). Faulkner is many-sided, responsive to terror, misanthropy, country humor, and lazy storytelling. From the war he obtained "an enlarged perspective which discerned the decadence of his native region while still holding to his associations with it," as Warren Beck has said, and this, along with the shock of war experiences, was the source of the tension in his work which was to show itself as nervous power. For Faulkner, moreover, bitterness with the South has been only one phase of a generally romantic pessimism.

The problem which faces every student of Faulkner is lack of center, the gap between his power and its source. As a historian of the South, Faulkner is dull and commonplace, often meaningless. The intensity comes rather from an inner conflict of love and hatred for his native region than from a conscious and procreative criticism of society. His "persistent offering of obstacles, a calculated system of science and obstructions, of confusions and ambiguous interpolations and delays," springs from a manifest absence of purpose rather than from a coherent aim. The subtlety of his technique, his fluency and fecundity, however, have been so notable that it is almost impossible not to read into his work social philosophy or intellectual complexity or reflective detachment. His imagination is brilliant but at the same time impure, a kind of higher ventriloquism.

One aspect of his work which comes from Faulkner's inner confusion is the compulsion to brood always at polar extremes. The characters appear in states of absolute desperation, as personifications rather than as human beings, and everything is expanded to a size larger than life. This grotesquerie should not be taken as the expression of some elaborate conception of the tragic South but as a simple lack of flexibility. Scenes and images are magnificently original, but grotesque. The love of an idiot for a cow is described in a long dithyramb, in a caricature that mocks itself. So in many scenes there is some final obsessive exaggeration or half-cynical grotesquerie. What one sees in Faulkner's mountainous rhetoric is the effort of a writer to impose himself upon that which he cannot create simply and evocatively. His corn-fed, tobacco-drooling phantoms are not the constituents of a representative American epic but the walking phantasmagoria, sensation beating against sensation, of his perpetual tension.

Shelley said, "I am convinced that there can be no regeneration of mankind until laughter is put down!" But Blake, who in an age when poets were notoriously solemn

about themselves had the temerity to be humorous, said, "I hate scarce smiles; I love laughing." This wise poet, who in his perception and resolution of the essential historical conflict in his age surpassed other poets, has influenced his puzzled critics to take the view that he was an unlettered man in whom divinity found utterance. In "The Mask of William Blake," appearing in the *Yale Quarterly Review* for summer, Mark Schorer analyzes Blake's poetical theory, the motives behind the theory, and the importance of the result in Blake's practice.

Blake conceived of four orders of vision, leading from simple sensation through the perception of spiritual forms in material objects and hallucinations (as when Blake saw Ezekiel sitting under a tree) to the highest order, which was simply an extremely vivid mental impression which had no external representation at all. The intensity with which he experienced the fourth order gave him the conviction that his visions were revelations. His genius obligated him to operate as "a literalist of the imagination." To Blake the image had precedence over the idea. But to see heavenly sights meant necessarily to hear heavenly sounds and to become the repository of heavenly wisdom. The poet as visionary is the first feature of the Blake mask.

The second feature is the conception of the poet who writes under divine dictate, in some sense automatically. Blake was attracted to the theories of Böhme, Lavater, and others as to the divine, spontaneous origin of poetic expression. He gave in ever more and more to the "sudden shower" of words. For Blake, the prophetic purpose did not mean prognostication but honesty and firm persuasion. He thought that every honest man is a prophet, who says, "... if you

go on So, the result is So. He never says, such a thing shall happen let you do what you will." Prophecy attracted Blake because it provided a sanction for complete independence of judgment, which, as revolutionary and religious dissenter, he needed. In 1800 poverty forced him to accept the patronage of William Haley, but this commercial relationship was so repugnant to him that for the last twenty-five years of his life he never compromised with his convictions.

The historical function of prophets is to order social wisdom toward a desired conduct of life. Blake stated most glowingly the most important piece of social wisdom of his day: "All Deities reside in the human breast." In this historical moment, the problem for poets was to reconcile the public and the private interest, the intellect and the sensibility. We are beginning to see that Blake alone of the poets in his time had an intuitive grasp of the essential conflict and that he alone established a dialectical formula to deal with it: "Without contraries is no progression." Blake formulated the conflict between those forces later called Civilization and Christianity, man's progress here and grace from above for another life. His early work may be regarded as an externalization of the conflict in a series of alternate statements. In other terms, this conflict is contained in such representative ideas as anarchy and order, liberty and fraternity, which again find externalization in the very form of Blake's long works, where a vision of order climaxes considerable literary disorder. The essential conflict in Blake and in his time may be briefly stated as the quarrel between politics and mysticism. Blake's system was his mask, the metaphorical opposite by which he meant to resolve his contraries.

BOOKS

*THE GIFT OF TONGUES*¹

Anyone who has followed Margaret Schlauch's writings on various subjects knows that she can make even the dullest theme entertaining. The subject matter of linguistics is not dull, but it has been so consistently handled in a dull manner that Miss Schlauch's entertaining treatment is something of a revelation. The virtues of *The Gift of Tongues*, however, are not limited to charm and humor.

Many teachers of English and of other languages have been baffled by their inability to find a discussion of language and languages both nontechnical and at the same time informative. Books on the development of the English language, although intended for students who will never specialize in linguistics, have usually been stuffed full of Old English paradigms and rules about Middle English pronunciation. Furthermore, they have been cluttered with Latin grammar.

Latin grammar is what usually passes for English grammar. It is often dolled up a bit to make it look like something else, but it is still Latin grammar. Furthermore, it is usually treated as though it were essential to human utterance. Miss Schlauch does everyone a great favor by chucking all this mess of antiques out and showing that Latin grammatical habits are not only not necessary but often simply missing in English. Furthermore, she makes it seem reasonable that some languages can get on without tense distinction in verbs, or with conjugation of pronouns, for instance.

Starting with a brief discussion of language as communication, Miss Schlauch proceeds to an account of sounds and alphabets, and family relationships among languages. Here she gives what is the most sat-

isfyingly teachable discussion of phonetics and cognates that I have seen. She includes all that the general student needs to know; she puts it pleasantly and nontechnically; and she leaves out what the general student does not need to know. Likewise, in her chapter on etymology she makes clear one of the processes of development of the English language without tormenting a student with great detail.

What she has to say about phonology and the history of the English language is exemplary. When, however, she discusses "Semantics: Vocabulary in Motion," she talks more like an old-time philologist than she usually does. She gives a good account of changes in meaning in the history of a language, and she gives a well-deserved spanking to those semanticists who advocate their specialty as a panacea. Miss Schlauch quite reasonably doubts that the study of meaning will cure human ailments. But she does not make clear that speech may be used in three perfectly legitimate ways, none of which, however, can properly be used for the others. We may talk to convey meaning, and we may talk to produce immediate activity in someone else, or we may write to these purposes. We may also talk simply as a bit of physical exercise. In not making clear the various uses of speech and in not considering the confusion that results from not distinguishing them, Miss Schlauch has failed to complete her chapter on semantics.

The chapter on "Language and Poetic Creation" establishes the desirability of linguistic knowledge in any reader of poetry. There is much more in a poem for someone who knows his English language than for someone who does not—as long as he does not let pedantic absorption in words take the place of reading poetry! Those of us who are not very happy in the puzzles of Crane, Joyce, Stein, and their ilk may wish that

¹ By Margaret Schlauch. New York: Modern Age Books, Inc., 1942. Pp. viii+342. \$3.50.

Miss Schlauch had chosen examples more from what we are likely to read than from what we are unlikely to read; but even by reference to the word-tormentors she makes herself clear.

Finally, in discussing the social aspects of language, Miss Schlauch gives a jumping-off place for entertaining research by any student into the language that he uses himself and hears all around him.

In spite of what some of us will feel a skimping of semantics, Miss Schlauch has written a book that is a better guide for more people than other books that have appeared so far and is at the same time full of humor. Most gratifying of all, perhaps, is the fact that it is written in a sprightly style that makes you want to read it just because it is such good reading. Examples, too, are chosen because they are amusing as well as because they are applicable.

Miss Schlauch has approached her subject with that sort of reverence that does not involve a long and horselike face at the mere mention of a name; it is rather the reverence of an enthusiastic, intelligent, and humorous worker for a job she loves. In letting us share some of the fun, she has made it possible for us to share a great deal of the knowledge. *The Gift of Tongues* is a book that an alert teacher will welcome joyously and that a pupil only half-alert will find worth waking up to.

S. A. Nock

KANSAS STATE COLLEGE
MANHATTAN, KANSAS

THE ART OF READING POETRY¹

The purpose of this book is to serve as "a guide to all those who would like poetry if they only knew how to find the enjoyment and understanding it holds." To showing this way are devoted roughly one hundred and fifty thousand words of explanation, poetical selections, and comments. Not far from two hundred and fifty poems are included, most of them short and complete.

¹ By Earl Daniels. New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1941. \$2.50.

About sixty of these have been chosen from seventeenth-century lyricists and practically the same number from twentieth-century writers of verse. After chasing some lions from the path, Professor Daniels devotes rather lengthy chapters to such topics as "The Stuff of the Poem," "The Poem as a Story," "The Poem as a Picture," "The Poem as an Idea," "The Poem as an Organization," and "The Poem as Music."

Obviously the book is the fruit of many years of college teaching. It bears evidence of wide and critical reading and of a trained taste. It offers a wealth of excellent suggestions on how to read poetry that should stimulate the neophyte and add many pearls to the collection of the advanced practitioner.

Despite Professor Daniels' declaration that "they have no right to limit poetry severely within the bounds of their own likes and dislikes," his treatment of his subject shows all too clearly his own preferences. While he seems to realize that in the house of poetry there are many mansions, he finds no place for Alexander Pope. Again, we look in vain for any representation of the proudest names of American heritage—of Emerson, of Poe, of Whitman—each of which, some of us believe, holds his secure place in the realms of gold. To find no space for "Come Lovely and Soothing Death" or to allow the verse of some twentieth-century poetaster to crowd out "Israfel" or "To Helen" in a chapter on "The Poem as Music" may appear rather unfortunate.

Probably the beginner is promised a bit too much when he is told (p. 38) that "one day things will click for him and he will become, in his turn, an expert no longer needing to do the drudgery of conscious analysis because practice has enabled him to receive the full impact of a poem at the first exposure to it." This promise seems to have been uttered in one of its writer's more optimistic moments, for certainly he finds plenty of passages to give him pause, especially in those recent versifiers who are cousins to the cubists.

One might wish, perhaps, that more space

had been granted to elucidating the connotative power of words and to presenting that alluring and fruitful study of the phrasal power of poetry, those services of the happy moments when lofty ideas and perfect expression are fixed in monuments more enduring than bronze.

On the whole, however, this book is the excellent work of an excellent and stimulating student of poetry, rich in guidance and laden with suggestions, several of which one teacher has already appropriated for his own classes. While nominally intended for beginners in the study of poetry, this volume will probably find its largest group of readers among those who have already done considerable traveling in the land of golden numbers.

H. G. PAUL

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

*DIRECTIONS IN CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE*¹

In two previous studies Professor Buck has established his special approach to world literature. It is quite remote from literary criticism in the narrow sense or sociological criticism or psychological biography or literary scholarship in the sense of comparative research. His interest has been consistently in the larger realm of ideas—ethical and philosophical concepts that literature has managed to embody. He has considered authors of the past largely on the basis of their “message” to the present rather than their illustration of the mores of a society or even their power to give pleasure or escape. “Great literature has ever been a search for a larger meaning in life,” he once wrote. “In a manner far more vital than the speculation of philosopher or moralist, the vision of the poet discovers the stature of man and the secret of the good life.” His two earlier works, in seeking these messages in older traditions, form a background for

his present survey of ideas in contemporary letters; and there are frequent reminders here of the faith and security that he found in Dante, Montaigne, and Goethe.

The great problem of our day Professor Buck defines as fear; we are “strangers and afraid in a world we never made.” And to each of his thirteen prophets he poses the earnest question: “What must we have to keep us safe from fear?” Pirandello and O’Neill, verging on cynicism, have done no more than strip seeming reality of its illusions to increase our understanding of the problem in ourselves. Santayana, Hauptmann, Gide, Proust, and Tagore have sought escape, for the most part pathetic, into various retreats: the essences of beauty, creative nature, unbridled instinct, Nirvana. Romans, Hitler, and Sholokhov have promised refuge from individual problems in a community spirit that binds man and yet frees him from himself. Only Huxley, Eliot, and Mann have, in separate ways, revived faith in the individual and a realistic hope for his spiritual peace.

Professor Buck claims to come away from this symposium “with a glow of respect and hope,” but this reviewer cannot share his reassurance. Granting that these writers do not all speak with equal authority, one is dismayed by the triviality and futility of over half the “answers” as they are stripped down to idea. Santayana’s “delicate skepticism” and retreat into “the mansions of beauty and pure thought,” Proust’s search for the permanent essence of reality in a succession of sentient moments, and Huxley’s mystical call to a “recognition of man’s full nature” and a new discovery of love are more likely to convince one of the impotence of the literary man as prophet, who must find his answer in the hazy terms of cosmic “vision.”

There is a certain unreality too in Professor Buck’s method, in his specialized search for pure idea. Although one must grant that ideas in literature have one kind of interest and validity apart from their author’s life or even his age, it is possible to distil an intellectual essence so rarefied and remote

¹ By Philo M. Buck. New York: Oxford University Press, 1941. Pp. 353. \$3.00; college edition, \$2.25.

from tangible or worldly things that it loses its relation to the pressingly real question it was designed to answer. The rhetorical embroidery in the style adds to this impression of unreality and artificial profundity and even obstructs sometimes the flow of ideas. Moreover, the choice of authors is almost necessarily as personal as the critical method: one may detect a special enthusiasm behind the inclusion of Tagore and even prejudice in the harsh treatment of the psychological Pirandello.

Yet none of this is to deny the real value of the book in its restricted sphere. There is a place for a mere summary of contemporary philosophies in literature; and, if Professor Buck has not searched far beyond his authors' statements of their ideas, he has skillfully abstracted these concepts and presented them in readable and generally fair perspective. The account of *Mein Kampf*, for example, is as sound and dispassionate a statement of its significance as I have yet seen. No one can fail to find here an enlightening, if also discouraging, review of the contributions of literature to solving the problems of our day.

ROBERT WARNOCK

UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

TEACHING THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Introduction to the English Language, by Albert H. Marckwardt,¹ is no history of the English language, such as Baugh, Toller, and Wyld have given us; nor is it a narrative study, after those of Jespersen, Robertson, and McKnight. It is literally an introduction to the science of English as a spoken and written medium. Its distinctive features are its technique and its order. The book does not so much present facts as it trains in methods of coming at the facts and of evaluating them. Its objective is an instructed, thoughtful, and mature attitude toward the problems of language.

¹ New York: Oxford University Press, 1942. Pp. xviii+347. \$2.15.

It is organized in a series of exercises, each introduced by essential explanations and discussions and equipped with suggested readings in the best modern authorities. The successful use of this book requires that the student co-operate actively and continually as he gathers and orders his materials, examines and analyzes them, and deduces from them his conclusions and judgments. These exercises have been tested through years of classroom trial; they are wise in their tenor and pertinency, and they reflect firm knowledge and rich experience on the part of their author.

The source materials are familiar and generally accessible, the principal storehouse being the 1935 edition of *Webster's New International Dictionary*, seconded by the *New English Dictionary* (the *Oxford Dictionary*). It is remarkable how few English teachers, even in colleges and universities, have learned to use and evaluate intelligently the great ready-to-hand, organized treasuries of fact about our language. The dictionary is all too frequently an Emily Post, a fundamentalist book, a grammatical Holy of Holies, approached by the zealous teacher for his own or his pupils' linguistic sins, real or imagined. The training devised by Marckwardt sends the student again and again to the dictionary until through study and experience he comes to understand its rationale, methodology, materials, and the nature of its authority. He learns to treat language problems on more than authoritarian principles.

Marckwardt reverses the usual prospect from past to present, in that he views the modern language first and in considerable detail, developing thus in living and familiar materials the principles and techniques of English linguistics. It is only after this that he turns to the past, to Shakespeare first, then to Chaucer and Wyclif, and finally to the Old English of Ælfric. The procedure is thus from the known to the unknown, and the lines of development always have their significance in the present status.

With the organization of his matter in exercises and with the survey from present

to past, the schedule of details becomes almost inescapable. In recognition of the primacy of the spoken over the written language, the first large section is devoted to phonetics, without which nowadays there can be no intelligent science of the living language. An equal section considers the nature of grammar and the principles of grammatical analysis and organization, with much emphasis on techniques of dealing with problems in usage. It is in these two sections that the tools of linguistic study are acquired—tools essential not only for the living language but for the historical period as well. Through them the historical period becomes alive. The author is wise in retaining as far as possible the traditional terminology, though he directs scrutiny toward its nature and validity—in this lies the resolution of the uncertainties befogging the whole field of grammatical terminology.

The illustrative passages from the older

periods are familiar in content, so that the principal energies can be expended on the language itself.

This book will be almost useless for those bright spirits who would substitute a week-end orgy of cramming for regular, steady work. It demands, from instructor and student alike, unceasing, accurate observation, careful analysis and thought, and the practice of sound judgment—a slow, painful process, and exhausting, but the only road to wisdom, in linguistics as in any other human endeavor. The book is not hard. It aims at the last two years of college, though it is eminently suitable for candidates for the Master's degree who contemplate teaching English. Even without a teacher, a serious and intelligent person can derive from it a rich acquist of experience and wisdom.

RUDOLPH WILLARD

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS

IN BRIEF REVIEW

[Mention under this head does not preclude review elsewhere.]

FOR THE GENERAL READER

The Seed beneath the Snow. By Ignazio Silone. Harper. \$2.50.

The hero of *Bread and Wine* reappears in this absorbing new story of Italy under fascist rule. The various characters are convincing. The author, whose life and experiences make him an excellent authority upon conditions in Italy, sees reason to hope that the seed of freedom may bloom again.

Signed with Their Honour. By James Aldridge. Little, Brown. \$2.50.

A stirring account of a British aviator's part in the fight for Greece and Crete. A tale of horror, of death and blunders, but also a tale of faith and pride, of honour and hope.

The Seventh Cross. By Anna Seghers. Little, Brown. \$2.50.

Across each of seven planer trees in the Nazi prison courtyard a flogging board is nailed—seven crosses, destined for seven Germans who have escaped from a concentration camp. One by one, six are caught, and a net is spread which involves all the

friends and enemies of George Heisler, the seventh. This involvement of so many persons of so many kinds depicts the German people realistically—still intensely human though emotionally and mentally twisted by nazism. Book-of-the-Month Club selection for October.

The Golden Horde. LaSalle Gilman. Smith & Durrell. \$2.75.

Captain Petrov, of the imperial Russian army, escaped to Mongolia after the Revolution. Here he met his princess. Distinguished in character and magical appeal.

Frontier Passage. By Ann Bridge. Little, Brown. \$2.50.

An English girl with her parents was spending the autumn of 1938 in a little village on the French-Spanish frontier. The story which Ann Bridge weaves of refugees, spies, diplomats, and journalists is exciting and revealing.

The Days of Ofelia. By Gertrude Diamant. Houghton. \$2.75.

A winsome little Mexican girl and her large and exciting family furnish a real thrill to jaded readers.

Get Thee behind Me. By Hartzell Spence. Illustrated by Donald McKay. Whittlesey House. \$2.75.

The author of *One Foot in Heaven* does another book about the same preacher's family in much the same tone, but with less emphasis upon the church activities and more upon the family relations.

Inner Springs. By Frances Lester Warner. Houghton. \$2.00.

These springs are insubstantial but not immaterial—what we should expect of Miss Warner. Twenty graceful, gently amused, bred-in-the-bone New England essays on people and family, with more comment than in the author's younger work.

Memories of Happy Days. By Julian Green. Harper. \$3.00.

Further autobiography, covering a period before that of *Personal Record*. A happy Paris boyhood, which many American lads would have found stuffy; ambulance work in World War I; study at the University of Virginia, with difficulty in adjusting to America; finding his vocation and the turmoil of artist Paris. The now repatriated French-born, French-bred American citizen now writes in English.

Van Loon's Lives. By Hendrik Willem van Loon. Simon & Schuster. \$3.95.

A van Loon view of the lives, backgrounds, and ambitions of forty of the great men and women of history. These people are presented at a series of dinner parties. Seven hundred pages, with illustrations. Literary Guild selection for September.

The World Was within Me. By Kathleen Coyle. Dutton. \$3.00.

A delightful picture of the noted writer's childhood in Ireland.

The Plenty of Pennsylvania. By Cornelius Weygandt. Kinsey. \$3.50.

Readers familiar with Weygandt's appreciative, historical studies will welcome this portrait of his native state.

They Were Expendable. By W. L. White. \$2.00.

"Expendable" is usable in a hopeless military effort, a mere delaying action. Four naval officers who served through the Philippine campaign have been permitted to talk freely about it, and Mr. White's readable version of their story has been approved. Heroism and excitement—and some thought-provoking, unpleasant facts.

The Guilt of the German Army. By Hans Ernest Fried. Macmillan. \$3.50.

In discussing who is responsible for Nazi atrocities, the author says we have thought too little about the German army and its uncompromising lust for power and aggrandizement. To Americans this is a horrifying and convincing picture of the common man subjected to brutalizing force.

Admiral Sims and the Modern American Navy. By Elting E. Morison. Houghton. \$4.50.

Entertaining, thorough, and authoritative is this study of Admiral Sims and the part he has taken in modernizing the American Navy. It is based on the admiral's papers.

A History of Latin-America. By David R. Moore. Prentice-Hall. \$5.65.

This timely history is a handsome and fascinating volume.

FOR THE INSTRUCTOR

Recordings for School Use, 1942: A Catalog of Appraisals. By J. Robert Miles. Prepared in collaboration with the Recordings Division, American Council on Education. World Book.

Questionnaires on the educational value of the programs, clarity and comprehensibility, audience interest and appeal, and actual or possible school uses were used in making the appraisals. The catalogue is organized by subject matter of the programs and carefully indexed. For each recording, Mr. Miles gives the specifications and price, a description of the contents, a criticism, and a rating. A very valuable handbook for the school administrator and the classroom teacher.

Oral Interpretation of Literature in American Colleges and Universities. By Mary Margaret Robb Wilson. \$2.75.

A history of the teaching of speech in America. Departing from the influence of English elocutionists, nineteenth-century teachers adopted a scientific approach to speech and oral reading. The period 1915-40 is one of enlarging the speech program.

The Nature of Literature. By Thomas Clark Pollock. Princeton University Press. \$3.00.

Mr. Pollock approaches the interpretation of literature by way of semantics. He explains the essentials of communication by language and distinguishes between the language of science and the language of literature. An important book on the relationships of semantics, literary theory, and literary criticism.

Some Letters of the Wordsworth Family Now First Published, with a Few Unpublished Letters of Coleridge and Southey and Others. Edited by Leslie Nathan Broughton. Cornell University Press. \$3.00.

Eighty-one letters of the Wordsworth family are included, of which forty-three were written to George Huntly Gordon. Most of the letters to Gordon, written by Wordsworth during the years 1828-32, are concerned with the poet's difficulties in educating and in placing his son and with his views on many subjects, from poor laws to books.

The Evolution of Balzac's "Comédie humaine."

Studies edited by E. Preston Dargan and Bernard Weinberg. University of Chicago Press. \$5.00.

This publication represents the culmination of the "University of Chicago Studies in Balzac," begun in 1927, of which three volumes have previously appeared. The late Professor Dargan, general editor, assisted by Bernard Weinberg and fifteen of Professor Dargan's former students, have explained the method of revision used by Balzac, his scheme for the *Comédie humaine*, and the nature of the variants in the different stories.

The Year's Work in English Studies, Vol. XX (1939).

Edited for the English Association by Frederick S. Boas. Oxford University Press. \$3.75.

All the usual chapters of this important annual bibliography have been written for the volume of the first war year except those on philology and the later Tudor period. These sections will appear in Volume XXI, each with a two-year span. The number of English studies held its own in 1939.

Realms of Being. By George Santayana. Scribner's. \$4.00.

Four of Santayana's books are collected in this large, well-bound volume: *The Realm of Essence*, *The Realm of Matter*, *The Realm of Truth*, and *The Realm of Spirit*.

The Oration in Shakespeare. By Milton Boone Kennedy. University of North Carolina Press. \$3.00.

The author demonstrates Shakespeare's understanding and extensive use of classical oratory. By means of oratory Shakespeare made his plots climactic rather than episodic, and he used impassioned but controlled utterance as a vital method of creating character.

Guinea's Captive Kings: British Anti-slavery Literature of the XVIIIth Century. By Wylie Sypher. University of North Carolina Press. \$3.00.

The literary expression of antislavery thought in the eighteenth century represents both the rationalists and the sentimental romanticists. Aphra Behn, Defoe, Pope, Chatterton and Mrs. Mackenzie illustrate the differences in approach. Mr. Sypher surveys the literature mainly by types but carefully defines the "currents of opinion."

The Dignity of Kingship Asserted. By G. S. Introduction by William R. Parker. Published for the Facsimile Text Society. Columbia University Press. \$2.20.

This polemic is a 248-page reply to Milton's brief pamphlet, *The Redie and Easie Way To Establish a Free Commonwealth*. Written, as Mr. Parker believes, by a quack physician, George Starkey, it represents the feelings and arguments of the English reactionaries just before the Restoration.

The Truth of Our Times. By Henry Peacham. Introduction by Robert Ralston Cawley. Published for the Facsimile Text Society. Columbia University Press. \$2.00.

Observations on English life and thought by the author of *The Compleat Gentleman*. These essays, on such subjects as "Liberty," "Schools and Masters," and "Common Ignorance," were first published in 1638.

Public School Broadcasting to the Classroom. By Carroll Atkinson. Meador (Boston). \$1.50.

This volume is the first of four research studies which are being published by the Nelson Memorial Library on broadcasting lessons to the classroom. The content is made up of reports collected from schools and colleges in various parts of the United States.

Intellectual America. By Oscar Cargill. Macmillan. \$5.00.

An elaborate study of foreign influences upon American thought as reflected by American men of letters during the past generation. German absolutism, French defeatism and decadence, and English cynicism—the product of English imperialism—are the influences upon the American Marxists, naturalists, primitivists, intelligentsia, and Freudians. Into these categories, Mr. Cargill propels a multitude of twentieth-century American writers.

The Wind Blew from the East. By Ferner Nuhn. Harper. \$3.00.

As the American tradition grew up and achieved character, the American might enjoy the native prospect as Emerson or the elder Henry James enjoyed it, or he might sniff the east wind, become homesick, and feel himself a poor relation, an outcast from the aristocratic and glamorous culture of Europe. Mr. Nuhn's book is mainly a critical interpretation of three poor relations: Henry Adams, Henry James, and T. S. Eliot. The interpretation is scholarly, acute, imaginative, and expressed in a richly imagistic style with colloquial overtones.

New Poems by Hartley Coleridge, Including a Selection from His Published Poetry. Edited by Earl Leslie Griggs. Oxford University Press.

The sixty-one hitherto unpublished poems which make up half the volume were selected from a manuscript collection of three hundred poems discovered by Mr. Griggs. Sonnets, epigrams, and occasional poems are the most frequent lyrical forms. Surely this attractive volume of 130 pages contains all that is significant by this belated romantic poet.

Saints and Sinners in Old Romance. By Charles Maxwell Lancaster. Vanderbilt University Press. \$3.00.

A readable and flexible translation of medieval poems, many of which appear in English for the

first time. Part I, "The Saints," has two sections, "The Martyrs" and "The Ascetics." Part II, "The Sinners," is mainly devoted to poems on the Tristan theme.

The Evolution of "The Faerie Queene." By Josephine Waters Bennett. University of Chicago Press. \$3.00.

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At Odd Moments. Edited by Bernard Darwin. Oxford University Press. \$1.75.

An anthology of prose and poetry from a wide range of English literature by an Englishman who knows how to relax when he reads. There is much about sport. The format of the book and the quality of the paper are poor.

Tennyson: Representative Poems. Edited by Samuel C. Chew. Odyssey. \$1.00.

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The Penthouse Theatre. By Glenn Hughes. French. \$2.00.

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Choric Interludes: Poetry Arranged for Times and Seasons. By Mildred Jones Keefe. Expression Co. (Boston). \$2.75.

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September to June. Edited by Robert J. Cadigan. Appleton-Century. \$1.32.

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A book similar in purpose to the same authors' longer book, *Intelligent Reading*. *A Primer* may be completed in from twenty to thirty assignments. Concise exposition and vigorous and aptly chosen passages of literature and journalism give help on many reading problems: propaganda, the values of connotation, and sentence rhythm and structure.

The Century Handbook of Writing. By Garland Greever and Easley S. Jones. 4th ed. Appleton-Century. \$1.20.

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A Writer's Handbook of American Usage. By Tom B. Haber. Longmans, Green. \$1.00.

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